



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



VERY GENTLE

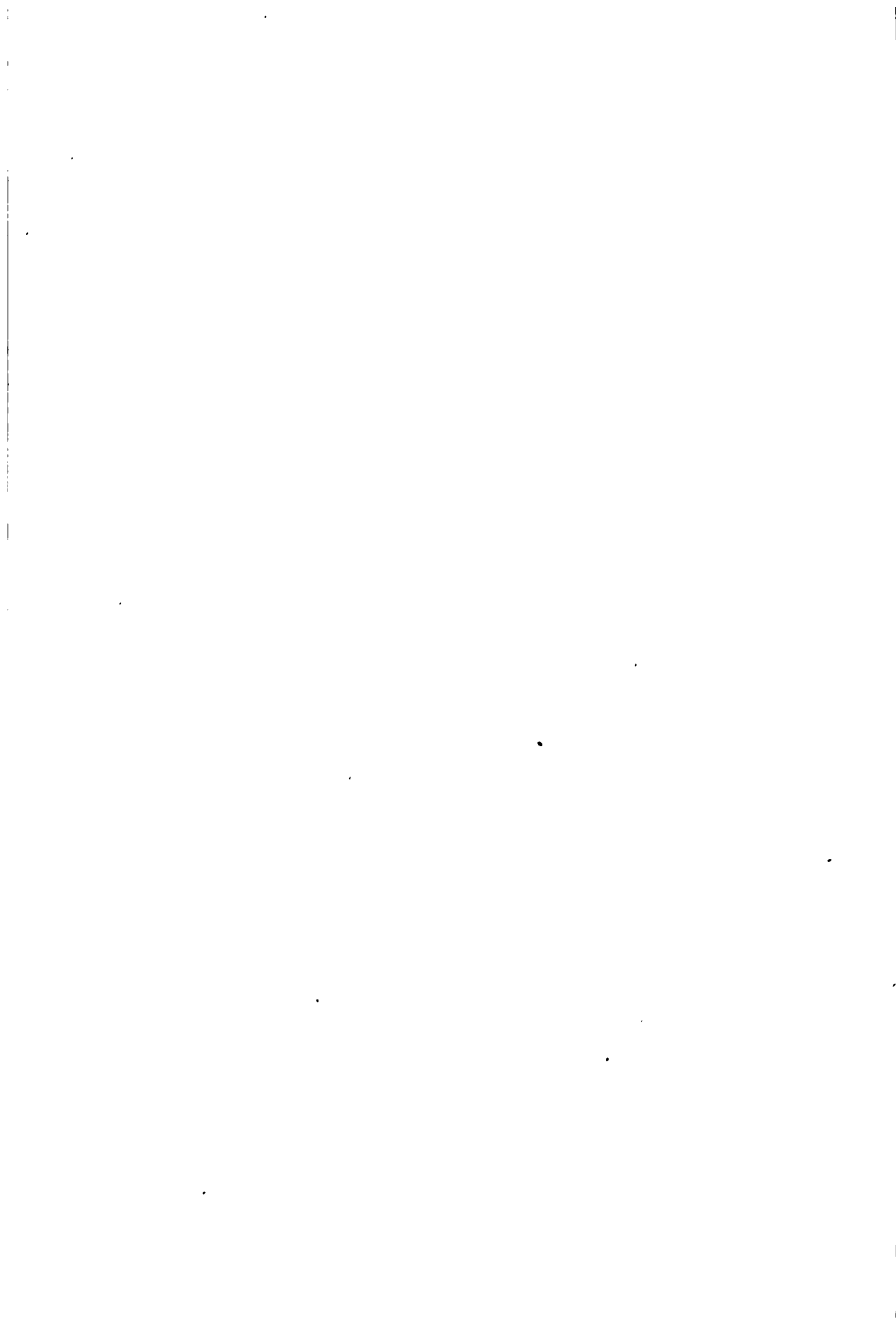
BY
THE AUTHOR OF
THE DEPTHS
OF THE



600060697Y







VERY GENTEEL.

STORIES FOR DAUGHTERS AT HOME.

Cloth, price 5s. each.

UNIFORM WITH THIS VOLUME.

KIND HEARTS. By Mrs. J. F. B. Firth, Author of 'Sylvia's New Home,' etc. With Frontispiece.

STEPHEN THE SCHOOLMASTER. A Story without Plot. By Mrs. GELLIE (M. E. B.), Author of 'The New Girl,' etc. 'Without lacking the savour of a good novel, the book is simple and pleasing.'—*Athenaeum*.

MY SISTER'S KEEPER. By Laura M. Lane, Author of 'Gentleman Verschoyle.' With a Preface by Mrs. TOWNSEND, President of the Girls' Friendly Society.

'Miss Lane's work is worthy of commendation. The purpose is one of the most excellent.'—*Academy*.

'BONNIE LESLEY.' By Mrs. Herbert Martin, Author of 'Cast Adrift,' etc. With Frontispiece by Miss C. PATERSON. 'There is no praise too high for Mrs. Martin's delightful story.'—*Academy*.

LEFT ALONE; or, The Fortunes of Phillis Maitland. By FRANCIS CARR, Author of 'Not Lancelot, nor Another.' 'A well-written and interesting tale.'—*Spectator*.

MY MOTHER'S DIAMONDS. By Maria J. Greer. With a Frontispiece by A. LUDOVICI. 'A lively and pure tale of family life.'—*Edinburgh Daily Review*.

GRIFFITH AND FARRAN,

SUCCESSORS TO NEWBERRY AND HARRIS,

WEST CORNER OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD, LONDON.

E. P. DUTTON & CO., NEW YORK.

VERY GENTEEL.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF 'MRS. JERNINGHAM'S JOURNAL,'
'FREDA,' ETC.



GRIFFITH AND FARRAN,

SUCCESSORS TO NEWBERY AND HARRIS,

WEST CORNER OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD, LONDON.

E. P. DUTTON AND CO., NEW YORK.

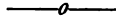
1880.

251. f. 793.

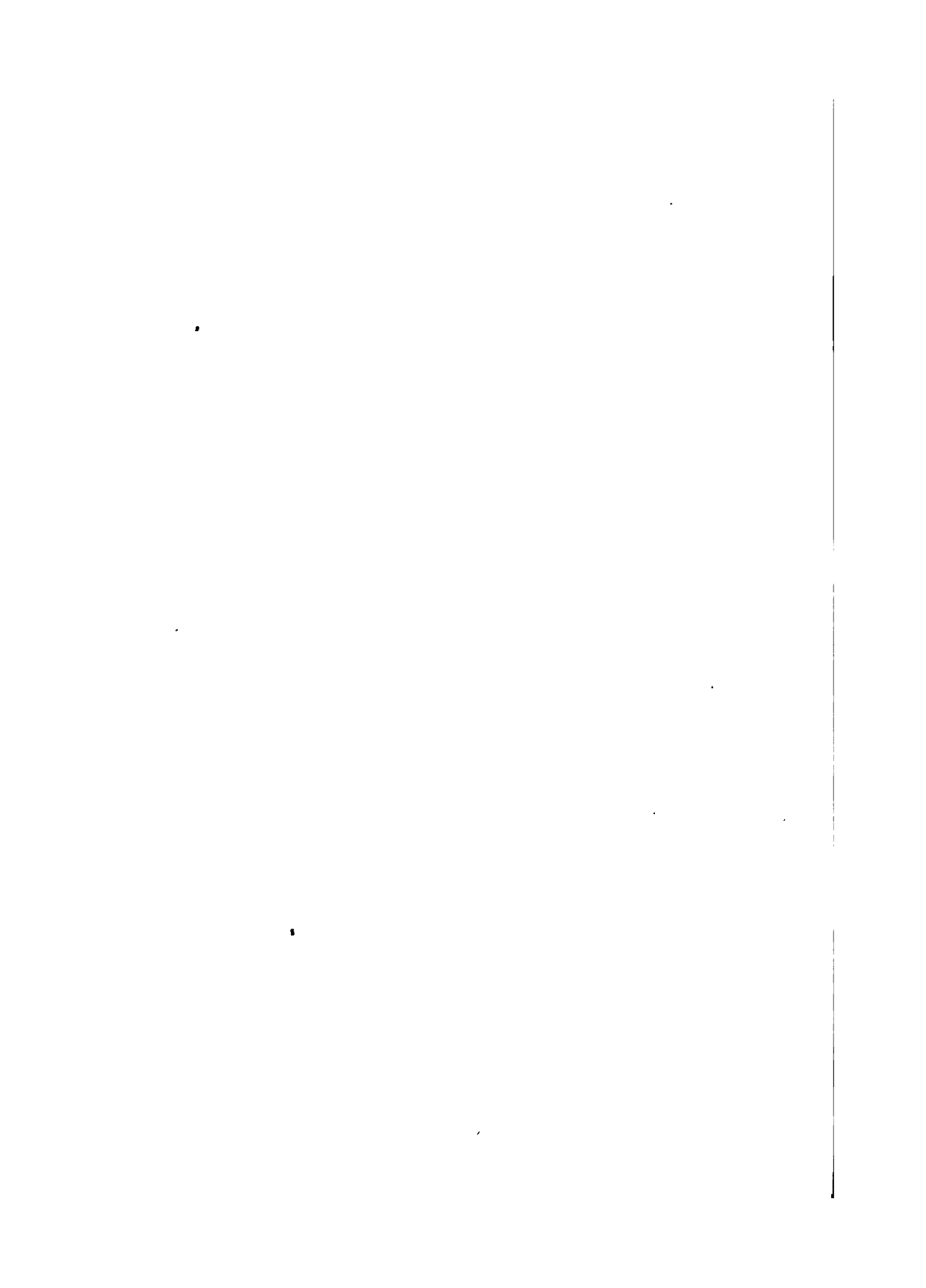
The Rights of Translation and of Reproduction are Reserved.



CONTENTS.



CHAP.	PAGE
I. HE AND SHE,	7
II. AT DINNER,	23
III. CONVERSATIONS,	40
IV. ANOTHER COUPLE,	63
V. FISHING,	96
VI. LATE FOR DINNER,	108
VII. DIANA HOPE,	119
VIII. A LETTER,	131
IX. MANŒUVRING,	146
X. THE FIRST FALSEHOOD,	156
XI. THE FISHERMAN AGAIN,	167
XII. WHITE LIES,	182
XIII. THE PLOT THICKENS,	199
XIV. THE CRISIS,	216
XV. 'I AM RUINED,'	233
XVI. 'I TOOK IT,'	250
XVII. WHAT HE DID,	268
XVIII. AT THE FARM,	286
XIX. THE END,	302





VERY GENTEEL.

CHAPTER I.

HE AND SHE.

WELL, of all the aggravating men on earth, Mr. Tippington,' exclaimed Mrs. Tippington, her brown eyes filling with tears, 'it's the worst you are!'

'Good gracious, my dear!' replied Mr. Tippington meekly; 'why?'

'Is it me can tell why?' cried his indignant wife. 'It's yourself can answer that question, I'm thinking. To ask the Donollys to dine with us on this day of all the days in the year, when you *know* it's only a few pork chops we're havin' for dinner, and such big ones too!'

'Well, my dear,' replied he consolingly, 'the bigger the better, if there are not many of them.'

'So vulgar!' said Mrs. Tippington; 'so like you! And what is it I'm to wear, pray? My only decent gown with the ink-glass spilt into the lap of it, and the most elegant black silk in Ireland, beautifully and fashionably made, comin' home to-morrow mornin'; and you to ask the Donollys to dinner to-night!'

'But sure it's to-day not to-morrow their kitchen chimney caught fire,' said Mr. Tippington. 'Is it I could help that?'

'And has *that* anything to do with it at all? Pork chops! I could cry when I think of them. And no time or possibility of getting anything else. I do wonder at you, Mr. Tippington. And the Donollys of all the people on earth! It's they sit down to their two courses or their three courses every day of their lives. I'm sure they do—their bit of fish, and their bit of meat, and their bit of pudding; and that it's *them* you should be asking, to find us eating pork chops! Sure it wouldn't have mattered if it had been the Mitchels or the O'Niels.'

'But it was the Donollys' kitchen chimney took fire, Lettice,' replied Mr. Tippington meekly; '*not* the Mitchels' or the O'Niels.'

'And then you say you're not aggravating,' retorted his wife; 'and I can't *bear* the Donollys to think we live on pork chops!'

'I'm not a bit ashamed of their seeing how we live ; and where's the harm of pork chops ?' retorted her husband.

'Oh, how like a man ! Men never *can* see the fitness of things !'

'Deed then, Lettice, I think a pork chop an *uncommonly* fit thing about four o'clock in the day when I feel hungry.'

'And it's *nothing* I have in the house to make a pudding or the shadow of a pudding, and no time to make it.'

'And if the first statement's true, the latter, to my thinking, doesn't signify.'

'And then you say you're not aggravating !'

'And I hope I'm not, though I don't really remember that I ever *did* say it.'

'Oh, Mr. Tippington ! and you don't care a pin about my dress either ! It's nothing to you that my beautiful black silk comes home to-morrow morning !'

'It is, my dear, a good deal to me, considering that it's I shall pay the bill, and that I've great pleasure in giving you a handsome and becoming gown,' replied Mr. Tippington.

'I never could have believed you would be so unkind,' said she.

'Unkind ?' cried he ; 'sure I won't pay the bill if you'd rather I didn't.'

‘Mrs. Donolly dresses so well always, and if you had only invited them for to-morrow, I could have had a *nice* dinner and worn my beautiful new black silk, and *now*’—

‘My dear Lettice! I didn’t ask them here to show off my fine dinners or my wife’s fine dresses, but just to convenience themselves, because their kitchen chimney’s caught fire. I said they must take us as they find us, and they were very much obliged, and I shall be very glad to see them.’

‘You!’ cried his wife, and there was actually contempt in her tone.

‘Yes, Mrs. Tippington,’ he replied firmly; ‘there’s plenty of dinner, I know, as it’s myself bought the chops, and there’s not a better cheese in Ireland than the one I’ve got in the larder.’

‘Pork chops and cheese! Oh, Mr. Tippington!’ cried she with a faint shriek.

‘Pork chops, and bread and cheese, and a drop of whisky punch, and I’m glad to give my good friends such good cheer,’ said Mr. Tippington. ‘And I’ll tell you what, Lettice,’ added he, in compassion to his wife’s pretty brown eyes, now actually overflowing with tears, ‘I’ll buy a shilling sponge-cake at Mitchel’s and half a dozen oranges for dessert.’

‘Well,’ she said slowly, ‘dessert *is* genteel; cake and oranges *do* make up for a good deal.’ She

dried her eyes, and her face brightened a very little, but she then shook her head sadly and murmured to herself, 'Pork chops!'

There was a world of pathos in the voice in which she uttered these two words, and her husband hastened to speak, that the more cheerful view of the subject might be continued.

'Give us a clean tablecloth,' said he; 'and tell Kitty to put on a clean apron; and do your hair bright and neat, and wear any of your nice frocks without minding what nonsense it's made of; and come with your own pretty, smiling face to bid our friends welcome, and faith, Lettice, it does not matter one bit whether we give them pork chops or roast turkey for dinner.'

Mrs. Tippington vouchsafed the faint ghost of a smile at some of her husband's pleasant words, and relented a little, but not without saying several times over to herself in a deplorable manner, 'So like a man, so very like a man!'

'And why shouldn't I be like a man?' demanded her husband. 'And by the same token, my dear, I think you are uncommonly like a woman.'

'If you mean by *that*, Mr. Tippington,' she began in great indignation.

'My dear, I mean *nothing* by it,' interrupted he, 'nothing whatever.'

'Well, remember,' cried Mrs. Tippington, whom

her husband's last imprudent words—the statement that she was uncommonly like a woman—appeared to have irritated in quite an extraordinary manner—‘remember, I wash my hands of it: I protest against the whole thing entirely. I say it's extremely unkind of you to ask the Donollys to dinner, when you *knew* we'd only pork chops in the house, and my black silk dress comes home to-morrow, and Mrs. Donolly always dressing so well!’

‘And I say that neither one nor the other is of the slightest consequence,’ replied Mr. Tippington in rather a loud voice. ‘I asked them because their kitchen chimney was on fire, and it's not much of a dinner they'd have had if they stayed at home; and if we had only potatoes and bacon for dinner—and many a time I've seen nothing else on my father's table—I'd have asked them just the same, since it was for their own sakes I did it, not for ours.’

‘Very well, Mr. Tippington,’ said his wife; ‘please yourself, and take the consequences.’

‘Which are?’ inquired he, rather astonished.

‘Sure, you know what I mean as well as I do,’ she cried, tossing her head; ‘there's nothing on earth vulgarer than pork chops. And you just see what the Donollys think of us.’

‘Why did you tell me to buy a loin of pork, then?’ asked Mr. Tippington, a little startled.

'Oh, they are very *nice*,' replied Mrs. Tippington ;
'but nice isn't *genteel*, and you know it isn't.'

'Sure,' said Mr. Tippington, recovering himself,
'pork chops *are* very nice ; and as to vulgar or
genteel, that's rubbish ! If you're not ashamed of
eating them with me, I'm not ashamed to give them
to the Donollys when their kitchen chimney's caught
fire.'

'Oh, mercy ! mercy !' cried she, stopping her ears ;
'it's myself that's sick to death of their kitchen
chimney. Why is their kitchen chimney's being on
fire to be dinned into my ears for ever ?'

'Do you wish to have a sponge-cake and oranges
for dessert, or do you not ?' asked Mr. Tippington.

'You know I do.'

'Maybe, then, there isn't more than time for me
to go out and get them,' said he, consulting his
watch.

And why don't you go, then ?' demanded his
wife tartly. 'Sure, nobody's keeping you.'

'There's nothing else you want, I suppose ?'

'There is. Leastways, you might as well order
a quart of soup to be sent in, and an apple pie,
while you're about it ; and *then* we shall have a
dinner we could set our friends down to without
being ashamed of ourselves, and feeling a blush on
our cheeks.'

'Who's ashamed ? I'm not. And as to soup and

apple pie, that is nonsense entirely! Mitchel's is not one of your fine confectioners who can send you out soup and apple pie for the asking. Clanmena is not Cork, and I'm not a fool. If it was fifty quarts of soup and five hundred apple pies I could have, I wouldn't touch them, to make the Donollys uncomfortable by going out of our way, and putting ourselves to ridiculous expense, as if we were ashamed of ourselves and our dinners. The Donollys' kitchen chimney was on fire. Says I, "Come and take pot luck with us." Says they, "So we will; and it's kind of you." And it's pot luck I'll give them, and neither more nor less.'

'Give it them, then; do,' cried Mrs. Tippington. 'And it's on my mind to say that as you haven't had a thought for me from first to last, it's yourself *shall* give it them, and I won't stir a foot out of my room at all.'

'And it's on my mind to say that you'll not be such a fool; for if you are, I'll tell the Donollys the reason right out, and that you are ashamed of pork chops.'

'As if I cared!' cried she. 'It's *any* one might be ashamed of pork chops. It's not I that am odd for *being* ashamed of them; it's *you* that are more than odd for *not* being ashamed of pork chops!'

'Sure, I'm not a Jew, am I?' retorted her husband. 'Now, look here, Lettice, don't be foolish. We've

no minutes to spare. Run down-stairs and give Kitty her orders, and then run up-stairs and make yourself fit to be seen, and I'll go out and get the cakes and the oranges; and by the time it's done, we'll have the Donollys here, for I said four sharp, and they said four sharp too.'

'And it's four that is the outlandish hour to dine at,' sighed his wife. 'Nobody dines at four now. It's two they dine at, like the English, or it's at six, seven, or eight o'clock. Sure, you may stare, Mr. Tippington, you who don't know the ways of genteel society, but it's the truth I'm telling you. There's the Queen dines at eight o'clock every day of her life, no less!'

'And does she really, now?' asked Mr. Tippington, decidedly interested and impressed. 'And it's no wonder Her Majesty's health isn't as good as we all wish it to be. But I'll tell you what, Lettice, it's the Bishop that dines at two with his family, that he does, I know it; the butler told me himself.'

'Bishops may do as they like; and you're not a bishop, Mr. Tippington,' retorted his wife, 'and a vastly ungentle one you'd make if you were. But they *do* say the Bishop favours English ways uncommonly; and didn't I tell you the English all dine at two o'clock? But, four o'clock! No fashionable person ever dined at four o'clock! Couldn't

you have said five or six, now? But, sure! you haven't the thought even to say five or six.'

'I'll not pretend I dine at one hour when I do dine at another,' answered he sturdily. 'I dine at four, and if a friend takes pot luck with me, he dines at four too. And I've no more time for talk. I'm going out to buy the dessert; and I shall tell Mrs. Donolly I got it for *her*. You see if I don't.'

'I daresay you will; you're likely enough to do that or any other aggravating thing,' called his wife after him as he went out of the house. 'Grant me patience!'

Before the Donollys arrive, while Mr. Tippington is buying the dessert, and his wife preparing her dress for dinner, we will look back a few months, and see how it was that a lady with such extremely exalted ideas as our heroine has shown in the conversation just narrated, ever consented to become the wife of a bookseller.

Mr. Tippington was a very respectable young man. His father was a farmer of the better class, and sufficiently well off to give his son not only an excellent education, but, when the time came, sufficient capital to enable him to set up a bookseller's shop in the pleasant, thriving town of Clanmena, situated somewhere or other—we need not exactly say where—in Ireland. He had received as we said before, an excellent education, and this

not only as far as books and learning were concerned, but in the yet more important point of religious training, without which, as we all know, books and learning may become a snare rather than a blessing. Having received such advantages in his father's house, and having profited by them, Frank Tippington began life on his own account with every desire to act rightly, and to act rightly from the highest motives.

Like most young men, he had his ideal of a wife, and he was perfectly certain that he should never fall in love till he had met with the realization of his ideal, or, if that was too much good fortune to be expected, at least with something very like it. And what was this ideal wife of Mr. Tippington's to be? She was to be staid, quiet, and discreet beyond her years; she was to be gentle, retiring, and timid; she was to be a capital manager and a good housewife, and she was not to care to stir from her own fireside, where she was always to be prepared to welcome her husband with a smile; she was to be a rock of sense, and ready with a wise hint or word of counsel whenever wise hints or words of counsel were wanted, and—still more excellent gift in woman—never when they were not wanted. She was not to think about dress and appearance, yet to be always neat, nice, and fit to be seen. She was to have neither vanity nor worldliness, but to be in all

things a sincere, humble Christian and a child of God.

Such was Mr. Tippington's ideal.

It is not perhaps very surprising that he had reached the age of seven-and-twenty and had never yet met with its realization, and, as he told himself, as a matter of course, had never yet fallen in love, when he was invited to pay a visit to some friends, at a fashionable watering-place on the sea coast. It was here that he met Miss Lettice Browne, also staying with friends. She was without question the belle of the society our young bookseller was introduced into, and was also without question the most beautiful girl he had ever met—gay, lively, and bewitching. Beauty, Mr. Tippington's ideal had never been allowed to possess. A neat figure and a comely presence was all that had ever been awarded to her. Beauty was a dangerous gift, and therefore it was not to be hers.

Alas for good resolutions, sensible intentions, and wise dreams! In the space of three days he had fallen in love with a fair face, a gay childish manner, and a rattling tongue—fallen in love desperately and irretrievably; and before the end of a fortnight he was the happiest of created men, and Miss Lettice Browne's betrothed husband. It was not that Frank Tippington had departed from his principles and ceased to value those things that from his child-

hood upwards he had been taught to consider as the only pearls of price. He felt and thought just as he had always felt and thought, and he believed that he was carrying out those principles in the most exemplary manner possible. But he had fallen in love, and therefore he gave his Lettice credit for possessing all the essential and important qualities that his ideal had possessed; while the less important adjuncts he acknowledged with delight that he had been altogether in the wrong about, and boasted to himself quite triumphantly that his Lettice was infinitely more delightful in every way than the dethroned *ideal* had ever been,—that archness was far better than timidity, sweet laughing words than words of counsel, and exquisite beauty than only a neat figure and a comely presence. Lettice Browne was admired, petted, and made much of by everybody who approached her; and as long as she was admired, petted, and made much of, she was always good-humoured, consequently Frank pronounced her temper to be perfect.

She fell in love with him in the most obliging manner possible when he showed that he wished it. He was good-looking, agreeable, and gentlemanly, and Lettice was delighted by his attentions; and when flirtation glided into reality she was delighted also with his affection. She owned candidly when she accepted him, that she wished he did not keep

a shop, and she looked so lovely while she owned it that Mr. Tippington wished the same.

'I never did intend to marry a tradesman,' she said pensively.

'How sorry I am,' cried Frank, feeling quite guilty because he was one. 'Then I wish I wasn't one, but there is no help for it now. What is it you *did* mean to marry?'

'Sure, anything but *that*,' she said; 'a clerk in a bank, or an agent, or a farmer, or anything. It's the man that keeps a shop can't rise to anything better, you see; he just keeps his shop and there he is.'

'But clerks, and agents, and farmers can't rise either,' said he eagerly.

'Can't they?' replied Lettice, surprised. 'But they might, you know; what's to hinder them?'

'A bookseller's is a very nice business,' urged Frank.

'It is,' she said thoughtfully; 'it's genteel.'

This was the first time that Frank Tippington heard the word 'genteel' from his Lettice's rosy lips,—the first time, but by no means the last.

Lettice Browne's father was an extravagant man who had run through a little money, and not supported himself or his family in the most respectable manner afterwards, trying first one thing and then another. But he always boasted of being a gentleman by birth, and was extremely particular about the *e* at

the end of his name,—a particularity which his daughter inherited from him. I believe she would rather have died than have signed her name Lettice Brown, without the final *e*.

The aunt she had been staying with at Rostrevor was the great lady of the family, and was fond of her pretty niece and god-daughter. She was fairly well off; but hers was a life income, and as she felt she could not provide for her favourite, she considered it her duty to assist her to a good and respectable marriage. And when Mr. Tippington offered, she and the rest of Lettice's family considered that by accepting him she would make, if not a great, a comfortable match. Mr. Tippington was not rich, his establishment was not large, he lived over his shop and only kept one servant; but he was a young man and a clever one. His father had given him capital to start with, he had opened his shop but a very short time, his father was still alive to give him further help if necessary, and a book-seller's was not like an ordinary shop—it was a genteel business. Lettice's friends pronounced that he would be a rich man before he was fifty, and that she was a lucky girl, whose pretty face had not been given her in vain.

Lettice had been to school and acquired a few accomplishments. She sang sweetly, she played a little, she drew a little, she knew a little French, and

she had taken lessons in the use of the globes. By the time she had reached a marriageable age, her father was going down in the world instead of up. He was too fond of his tumbler of punch to be a rising or a prosperous man, and he gave his daughter nothing by way of a marriage portion, and so poor a trousseau that three months after the marriage, which is the date at which this story commences, she had been glad to coax her husband into presenting her with a black silk dress, and was now in real distress what to put on for dinner, having been so unlucky as to spill ink over her Sunday best. What little money her father had given her to expend on her trousseau she had of course spent in a very foolish manner, buying smart finery and trumpery jewellery, instead of good and substantial clothes; so that for a bride of only a quarter of a year's standing, she was in reality not at all well off, and had a very insufficiently filled wardrobe. She had, however, never been accustomed to anything better, though no one would have enjoyed it more if she had been; but she was beginning to long for pretty dresses, and to consider that it would be very hard if Frank did not buy them for her whenever she wanted them. She had never possessed anything so handsome as the black silk he had bought, and consequently she felt it as an intolerable hardship that he had asked people to dinner the day before it was to come home.



CHAPTER II.

AT DINNER.

WHEN her husband had left her, Lettice ran up-stairs into her bedroom, all anxiety to discover what she could possibly wear, and how she could possibly make herself fit to be seen, or nice enough for 'those Donollys.'

The bedroom was small, and rather untidy, and the drawers she began to search eagerly through were not kept in the best of order either. They were all open, and their contents tossed about, but what she saw and handled rendered her only more dissatisfied and perplexed.

She sighed deeply, and looked very melancholy. 'What it is to be rich,' she said sorrowfully, 'and to find the drawers full of pretty things and the purse full of money!'

At last, after pulling all her dresses—and they

were not many—about, she decided on a white dress with blue spots over it ; it was a thick muslin, and there was a blue sash belonging to it. It was tumbled, and it was not very clean, but it was showy, and Lettice dearly loved showy things. Hunt as much as she might, she could not find a clean collar and cuffs, and she was finally obliged to wear a set that were, to put it mildly, rather soiled. This vexed her, but she consoled herself by pinning a bunch of blue ribbons in her hair, and tying a large carbuncle locket round her neck ; and then she added her watch and chain, some bracelets, and a pair of long, shining earrings, little owls swinging about in rings. She completed her toilet by shoes with such high heels that she could hardly walk down-stairs in them, and had the greatest difficulty in balancing herself properly, and not falling about.

She had spent a long time in piling her hair up over a cushion, and frizzing it out of all its own shining beauty into a tangled, somewhat untidy mass. But in spite of everything that Mrs. Tippington did to disfigure herself, she looked excessively young, fresh, and pretty when she had finished her toilet—a toilet, however, that had taken so long a time to finish, that when she stumbled down the narrow stairs as nimbly as her high-heeled shoes would permit, she found Kitty

had already laid the table for dinner, and that it was within a few minutes of four o'clock.

'How stupid you are!' she cried to the girl; 'you must take all those vulgar things off again, and put a clean cloth on, and use the best dinner set.'

'Shure, ma'am dear,' replied Kitty, 'an' there's not a clane cloth at all, at all; an' the other set isn't dusted, and the dirt lyin' on it that deep—that it is, thin,' and she held up a very dirty finger of her own, with a triumphant air, to show how deep the dirt lay on the best dinner set.

'What a shame!' cried Lettice; 'indeed, Kitty, it's too bad of you. But there *must* be a clean tablecloth!'

'Deed there isn't, thin,' replied Kitty with the utmost placidity; 'leastways, this is a good little bit the clanest.' And, in fact, what with some of the tablecloths having been torn and not having been mended, and some having been sent to the wash, and some having *not* been sent there, Kitty clearly proved that the soiled one on the table was the only available cloth in the house.

'There's the three at the wash, that lay with the dirt in 'em for iver so long, till I sent 'em meself; and there's the last week's one, that went, in course; and there's the one with the big hole in it; and there's this—six in all, and six is all

iver I seen since I came to the house,' said Kitty with serene composure.

'It's too bad!' cried Lettice; 'and there's that great spot of gravy on it.'

'Is it the gravy? Shure it was the master himself did it, when he turned the beef,' answered Kitty, as if she considered *that* fact made it of no consequence at all.

'Well, it can't be helped,' said Mrs. Tippington; 'but this is the sort of thing that always *is* happening. And I was so very anxious to have the dessert on the tablecloth, and now it's impossible; the cloth must be taken off, and the dessert put on the table, which is so vulgar. I'd almost as soon not have any dessert at all. Now, Kitty, be sure that you hand the chops round. Don't let the master help them, whatever you do. Hand them round first, and then hand round the vegetables.'

'Is it me, ma'am?' cried Kitty, astonished; 'an' it's not to let the master help them I am, an' he in his own house? Well, *that* bates anythin'!'

'Don't forget,' replied her mistress grandly, and so went up-stairs into the sitting-room, or, as she always called it, the drawing-room. She had changed the apartment at the back of the shop into a dining-room, and had persuaded her husband to close up the little window intended to command a view of the place where buying and selling went

on. Then the bedroom over the shop had been made by her earnest desire into a drawing-room, while a small back chamber answered the purpose of bed and dressing-room in one.

Lettice had been very happy turning everything topsy-turvy. At first she was shocked at the vulgarity of Frank's arrangements, and was anxiously desirous to make matters more genteel. He gave her *carte blanche*, though he now and then ventured to ask a question or murmur a dissent; and when all was done, he boldly said that though it was quite right the house should be arranged according to her wishes, for his own part he had thought it more comfortable before. Lettice looked lovely, laughed charmingly in his face, and declared men never *did* know when they were well off; and of course her young husband immediately kissed her, and remarked that he believed he was a man who *did* know when he was well off—in a wife.

On the present occasion, Mrs. Tippington busied herself in making this said drawing-room look as uncomfortable as possible. She put her work and writing things away. She took two or three show books, gaily bound and with pictures in them, and laid them on the table. She placed the chairs stiffly in a line against the wall, and then she sat down on the sofa, with her hands in her lap, arranged herself into a lady-like and becoming

attitude, and remained there doing nothing but waiting patiently for her friends to take her by surprise.

She started in the most natural manner imaginable when Mr. Tippington and his companions entered the room, and looked up as if she had not in the least expected them, but was in the habit of sitting in this manner for the greater part of her time, and had by no means been waiting for them for the last ten minutes. Then she shook hands with Mr. and Mrs. Donolly, and said rather languidly, 'How do you do?'

Mr. Donolly was a man of about thirty years of age; he was the first wine merchant in Clanmena. He and Frank had been schoolfellows; they liked each other when boys at first sight, and soon became firm friends, which they had remained ever since. When Frank's father had determined on starting him in trade, it was in great measure through Mr. Donolly's influence that Clanmena was fixed on for his residence, and he was mainly instrumental in the business arrangements that followed. He was an honest, straight-forward, open-spoken young man. Mrs. Donolly was about five-and-twenty, six years older than our heroine, who was only nineteen,—a cheerful, pleasant woman, who, if not regularly handsome, had, at all events, the neat figure and comely presence which Mr. Tippington's ideal had

possessed. Her dark hair was prettily dressed in coils round and round her comb, innocent of cushions or chignon, and not frizzed ; her gown was of brown cashmere, well made, and set off by collar and cuffs faultlessly white and clean, the former fastened by a handsome cameo brooch, which was her only ornament. Her manners were open, unaffected, and refined.

Lettice glanced over her from top to toe in the sort of manner that some ladies of higher position than Mr. Tippington's wife are in the habit of doing in order to take in all the particulars of an acquaintance's dress — a trick not unfrequent in those who are or have been in the habit of making or planning their own costumes. A pang went to her heart as she did so ; but she consoled herself with the idea that after all Mrs. Donolly was too plainly dressed, and quite too deficient in ornament ; and she remembered her carbuncle locket and oval earrings with peculiar pride and pleasure, which strengthened and supported her very comfortably in her affected manner. Affectation requires a great deal of support sometimes.

'It is so good of you to let us come,' Mrs. Donolly said, smiling, while she shook hands with her hostess.

Lettice sank back on her sofa, half-closing her eyes.

'There was so little time,' she murmured ; ' I am afraid it is a very poor dinner—if I had only known ! '

Here she paused, smiled faintly, closed her eyes, and gave a little sigh. This sigh Lettice was fond of, and considered one of the best bred things she did.

Of course her speech, even without its die-away mode of delivery, made Mrs. Donolly uncomfortable. If we want friends to feel themselves welcome, we should give them the best we have, without any apologies for its not being better.

Mrs. Donolly's cheerful face clouded over a little.

' I hope it is not inconvenient ? ' she said.

' We are delighted to see you,' replied Frank sturdily. ' Sit down ; dinner will be ready directly.'

His wife closed her eyes, and shrank a little as he spoke, as if his voice was too loud for her.

' Anything in the papers to-day, Mr. Donolly ? ' asked she in a simpering manner. ' It's the opera is in Dublin just now, isn't it ? '

' Sure, Mrs. Tippington, I didn't look to see,' answered that gentleman briskly ; ' for, just to tell you the truth, operas are not much in my line any way.'

' I am so fond of music,' drawled Lettice, and then she sighed again.

' Why don't you sing in church, then ? ' asked he, smiling.

‘That’s what I’m always telling her, Donolly,’ said Frank. ‘It’s the voice of a bird she has, and never a note can I get out of her in church, and it’s a pity.’

‘It’s the choir does that,’ said Lettice languidly ; ‘that is its duty, and why should I?’

‘Why shouldn’t you?’ replied Mr. Donolly.

But nobody felt called upon to answer either question, for at that moment Kitty announced that dinner was ready.

‘It’s not what I could have wished,’ murmured Lettice ; ‘but I couldn’t help myself, and Mr. Tipplington’—

The rest of her speech was either lost or not spoken, as the party of four went down the rather narrow stairs that led to the parlour behind the shop.

Frank’s eye at once fell on the soiled tablecloth, and then glanced somewhat reproachfully at his wife. She coloured a good deal, but did not vouchsafe even a look in reply. Almost before they had taken their places, or he had finished saying grace, the obedient Kitty, just as he was about to commence his labours as host, snatched away the dish full of pork chops from before him, and with what looked almost like a stare of defiance fixed on her astonished master, handed it to Mrs. Donolly—handed the dish to her ; but as in the dish was neither spoon, knife,

nor fork, poor Mrs. Donolly did not know what to do with it, or how to help herself to her dinner.

Mr. Tippington, all amazement at the unexpected manœuvre, looked on in silence, and, man-like, never noticed the dilemma in which his guest was placed ; while Mrs. Tippington sat upright in her chair with her eyes fixed on her plate, because she knew it was the height of *ungentility* to appear interested in what occurred at her own table ; so she was as ignorant as her husband that there was anything wrong.

Mrs. Donolly at last solved the difficulty by helping herself with her own knife and fork, as she did not like to ask the one handmaiden, Kitty, for a spoon, for that would have necessitated her putting the dish down again while she fetched one. Meantime, Mr. Tippington destroyed Lettice's whole programme of elegance by helping Mrs. Donolly himself to the vegetables, which, as the table was small, and laid for only four people, he could easily reach. To his unsophisticated, perhaps we should say *ungenteel*, mind, this seemed to him more polite than to let her wait till Kitty had finished handing round the meat and could attend to the other dishes. His wife gave him an indignant and disgusted look when she saw what he was about ; but it fell harmless on him, because, poor man, he was not even aware that he was doing wrong, so it never occurred to him that he could have excited her displeasure.

The Donollys made an excellent dinner, in happy ignorance that it was a vulgar one ; but Lettice was miserable the whole time, regretting bitterly that the chops were not chickens, and that the cheese was not a pudding, and feeling perfectly certain that their guests would never think as much of them again as they had done before this unfortunate day, when they had found them dining at—four o'clock, on—pork chops.

Mrs. Donolly, however, chatted away, and made herself extremely pleasant.

'I do hope you like Clanmena, Mrs. Tippington?' she said. 'You've been long enough here to judge a little about us by this time.'

'It's well enough for so small a place,' replied Lettice, with elegantly-drooping eyelids ; 'but it's a very different life I have been accustomed to, you know.'

'Sure large towns have their advantages, and so have little ones,' said Mr. Donolly, coming to his wife's rescue.

'Have they?' lisped Lettice, but so demurely that nobody, not even her husband, felt that she meant to be saucy.

'I like one thing or another,' said Frank, 'big or little. Give me London or Dublin ; but if I haven't them or the likes of them, I'll choose Clanmena or Clanross rather than Derry or Cork.'

Lettice slightly cast up her eyes and then drooped the lids again. 'Choose Clanmena!' she murmured faintly in an ineffable manner. She had not at all forgiven her husband for helping the vegetables.

'I never find myself here,' continued Mr. Donolly, looking complacently round him, 'without feeling what an uncommonly lucky fellow you were, Frank, to get this house at all;—and wasn't it just in the nick of time you were? A week later and you'd have missed it entirely.'

'But where was the great luck of getting it, I want to know?' said Lettice superciliously.

'My dear ma'am! why, it's the very situation of all others for a bookseller's shop,' answered Mr. Donolly, astonished. 'And then look at the house; it is such a capital house!'

'Capital house!' echoed she. 'Sure, Mr. Donolly, it's laughing at us you are, with such a shabby little dining-room as this, and the drawing-room with a corner cupboard in it,—why, I should be wretched if I did not think we will move before long.'

'Move from this house, Mrs. Tippington?—move from such a house, and such a situation? 'Deed, then, I'm sure your husband will never think of such a thing: it would be madness, no less; and what will his father say?'

'But you know I have not the slightest intention of moving,' said the master of the house calmly.

Lettice coloured deeply, and bit her lip with mortification.

‘It may do very well,’ she said instantly, ‘for those who don’t know any better ; but *I* have been accustomed to nice rooms and plenty of them, and I *miss* it.’

‘But I think your drawing-room quite a pretty room,’ said Mrs. Donolly kindly.

‘I hate it,’ replied Lettice in haste, so much annoyed with her husband that she wished to annoy him in his turn ; and she succeeded as much as any wife could desire, for he looked both uncomfortable and vexed.

‘Pretty, is it ?’ she continued ; ‘and can any room be pretty with a corner cupboard in it?—so old-fashioned and vulgar ! And the windows are small ; it’s a prison it is, with the little windows and only a Victoria drugget on the floor, and not a lounging chair in the place. It’s different from the rooms *I’ve* been accustomed to, entirely.’

‘But you’ll *become* accustomed to it,’ said Mr. Donolly, trying to turn off the uncomfortable speeches of his friend’s wife ; ‘it’s all habit. It’s the creatures of habit we are, Mrs. Tippington ; and *these* are the rooms you’ll be comparing others with in a month or two.’

He laughed as if he had made a good joke as he spoke, for he pitied his friend sincerely, and

wished to make matters more comfortable if he could.

'And, do you know, I thought that an uncommonly comfortable chair I was sitting in before dinner. Sure that is a lounging chair, isn't it now, Mrs. Tippington?'

'That!' cried Lettice, curling her rosy lips in scorn, and looking extremely pretty as she did so; 'that horrid thing with its upright back, and its big stuffed arms! Sure it's as old as the flood, Mr. Donolly, and you will see that sort of thing in farm-houses, you will indeed. I mean fashionable chairs, pretty and light to look at, and *delicious* to sit in.'

'And it's from a farm-house that chair did come,' said her husband, deeply wounded, but speaking with preternatural calmness, 'and *I* like everything that even reminds me of a farm-house. I was born in a farm-house, and bred in a farm-house. All my earliest associations are connected with a farm-house, and perhaps my *happiest* too.'

'One can't help where one is born or where one is bred,' said Lettice, 'but one can help where one lives afterwards.'

'My father was a farmer, and I'm a tradesman,' said Mr. Tippington with a very melancholy attempt at a cheerful, unconcerned manner; 'and it's proud of the one I am, and not one bit ashamed of the other.'

Mrs. Donolly came hastily to the rescue. She

and her husband had been away from home for some time, so that the acquaintance they had formed with Lettice was only slight ; and it, slight as it was, had been made during those bright earlier weeks of her marriage, before she had become captious with her husband, and discontented with her position, and while her heart had still been full of softer and more amiable feelings.

‘But Clanmena is not a bad place,’ said Mrs. Donolly ; ‘it’s not a bad place it isn’t when you come to know it. There are pretty walks and drives about it, and charming spots for picnics. It’s only a winter you’ve spent here as yet, Mrs. Tippington ; but as the summer comes on, I’m sure you’ll be greatly pleased with the neighbourhood ;’ and then Lettice made her signs in the most approved and latest fashion, to show that the gentlemen were to be left alone, and the two ladies went up-stairs and entered the drawing-room—the drawing-room with the objectionable corner cupboard in it.

‘I’m afraid we can’t stay long,’ said the guest ; ‘as soon as the gentlemen join us, we must be returning home. It was so kind of you to ask us, and such a convenience to us ; but you see, this is a busy evening with Mr. Donolly, and I have to help him draw up some invoices.’

Mrs. Tippington turned her beautiful eyes to-

wards her friend with an expression of languid astonishment in them.

'You help him!' she exclaimed.

'I do, and there's nothing I like better; 'deed, there's nothing I like so much as helping him. I am only sorry that in his business there's so little I can do. I quite envy *you*, Mrs. Tippington. It is a great deal you must be able to do.'

'I? Oh, my dear Mrs. Donolly, why, I never think of doing a thing!'

'Don't tell me that; I don't believe it. I'm certain you do; and a bookseller's is such a pleasant business, I'm sure you make yourself as useful as possible.'

'Useful!' sighed Lettice with an almost pious dismay.

'Do you know,' continued Mrs. Donolly, 'I wrote such a sprawling hand when first I married,—just an up-and-down school-girl hand, you know,—I did indeed. It was in despair I was. It seemed as if I could be of no good at all; so I got copy-books, and I worked and worked till I formed a capital round business hand of my own. And now, what d'ye think, my husband says I'm twice as good as any clerk he ever knew,' and the cheerful little woman laughed gleefully as she spoke, and never seemed for a moment to doubt the sympathy of her companion.

Her companion, who looked at her in mild amazement, then cast down her eyes, then raised them

again, hesitated and paused, and at last replied quite anxiously :

‘But I will never *think* of doing anything of the kind.’

‘You will not?’

‘No, I will not indeed ; why should I? It is different with you, Mrs. Donolly ; your husband is a merchant.’ She stopped here and gave a great sigh.

Mrs. Donolly looked unaffectedly puzzled. ‘I don’t understand,’ she said softly.

‘You will not ask me to help in a *shop*, I am sure?’ replied Lettice with dignity. ‘I never expected—I never intended to marry a shop. It is not the sort of thing I’ve been accustomed to, Mrs. Donolly, and I couldn’t think of doing it—I couldn’t, indeed.’

‘But if you *have* married a shop,’ cried the other, an arch laughing look in her eyes as she uttered the cruel words.

‘Oh, Mrs. Donolly,’ cried Lettice, putting up her hand appealingly, and with almost a faint scream.

‘My dear child, you have married a tradesman,’ replied she very seriously, but at the same time very kindly, ‘and you should make your mind up to enter cheerfully into all the duties of a tradesman’s life.’

‘Oh, Mrs. Donolly,’ cried Lettice faintly, a lovely pink tint stealing over her young fair face, ‘I didn’t marry for duties!’



CHAPTER III.

CONVERSATIONS.

MRS. DONOLLY burst out laughing and tried to look serious in vain.

‘But if you did not marry for duties,’ she said, recovering herself, ‘you *are* married; and you *have* duties, have not you?’

‘Have I, then?’ replied Lettice simply.

‘Excuse me, but I think we all have. What do you say in the catechism?’

‘The catechism? oh my! What *do* I say there, I wonder?’

‘You speak of doing your duty in that station which it has pleased God to call you to.’

‘But catechisms are for children, if you please, who *have* to do as they are bid; and it’s long since I learned mine, any way.’

‘Is it? No; it is not so very long since you have had to say it, is it now, Mrs. Tippington?’

‘My dear Mrs. Donolly, why, when do you suppose I said it? It was not through the catechism I was courted,’ and she laughed gaily.

‘But you have been confirmed, haven’t you?’

‘Confirmed?’

‘You are just a girl, though you *are* married, and you can’t have forgotten being confirmed,’ said Mrs. Donolly, fixing kind eyes on her.

‘Yes, certainly,’ cried she with animation; ‘it is only three years since I was confirmed. That was very nice; I liked it. I made my white dress myself, leastways the pleasant parts of it. I was at school, and we all made the pleasant parts of our dresses ourselves for the confirmations; and we wore veils, and I *have* such a lot of hair to put a veil in; and guess,’ added she, laughing and blushing and looking quite lovely while she spoke, ‘what myself heard one of the curates say?’

‘One of the curates! What *could* you have heard one of the curates at a confirmation say, except the service?’

‘Ah, what could I?’ cried Lettice, shaking her pretty head to the eminent risk of cushions and chignon. ‘He said—and he was a very fine young man, too—he said, “Well, what a pretty creature! Who is she?” There now, Mrs. Donolly, I daresay you’re thinking me very vain and silly for telling; but it was whole ages ago, and it was but a girl I was.’

'I think *he* was more than silly for saying such a thing on such an occasion. Ah, idle words, what a deal of harm they do, don't they?' replied Mrs. Donolly with quite a look of pain in her kind eyes.

'Deed, then, I don't know,' said Lettice, simpering; 'if people *are* pretty, they find it out for themselves sooner or later, and it's generally sooner, I'm thinking.'

'There's no harm in knowing you are pretty,' said Mrs. Donolly, smiling good-naturedly; 'you can't help it, I suppose, and you need not think too much of it, you know.'

'Sure, we cannot help thinking about it more or less, and I suppose it's generally more,' said Lettice. 'It seems most of what we've got to think about when we are young, and when we are old we will not have it at all.'

'When a girl marries, it's her husband she has to think about, and how to please him and make him a good wife; and so her pretty face will fall out of her thoughts a little, will not it?' said Mrs. Donolly.

'Sure it's men ought to please us, and make us good husbands!' cried Lettice. 'Just think of all they're saying and all they're doing, and how they go on only to make us marry them. I'm sure *my* husband ought to do everything he possibly can to please me and make me happy.'

‘And don’t you think you ought to do the same by him?’

‘Deed I don’t, then,’ replied Lettice briskly, and shaking her pretty head; ‘if I’m pleased and made happy, I think it’s all that can be expected of me.’

‘But in our position,’ remonstrated her guest, ‘there are so many duties we *must* perform, and so much we *ought* to do. It’s not like the rich ladies we see, whom men marry *only* because they love them, and take them from one luxurious home where they will have nothing to do, to put them into another with just as little. If you and I neglect our duties, it is as wrong and as inconvenient and as serious as if our husbands neglected theirs.’

‘You seem to think of nothing but duties,’ said Lettice discontentedly.

‘Oh, I do; I think of a great many other things. But of course I *have* to think of duties first; if I did not, everything else would be such a mess, would not it now?’

‘But everything *is* a mess,’ said Lettice.

‘Is it?’ replied Mrs. Donolly, a little slyly; ‘and may not that be because you *don’t* think of duty first?’

‘I don’t think of duty at all, then,’ said Lettice crossly, ‘and I don’t want to think of it. Oh yes, of course I *do* my duty; everybody does, I suppose. But I am young, and—and—what were we talking

about just now?—and I have just married a young man, and I've got a house and things of my own, you know—lots of things; and I want to enjoy myself, and not to be bothered about my duty. Sure I *do* it, whether I think about it or no.'

'And I won't bother you,' replied Mrs. Donolly good-naturedly; 'but you know you've married an old friend of ours, whom we are both of us very fond of.'

Lettice laughed and blushed, and as she did so there was a look in her beautiful eyes that betrayed to Mrs. Donolly that she was very fond of him too.

'I always used to think,' said she pensively, 'that it's a real gentleman I'd marry, and aunt always said she was sure I could if I tried.'

'But I should not like to try to marry any one,' said Mrs. Donolly; 'it's men that ought to do the trying, and we that ought to be tried for.'

'And I'm sure *I* never tried for any one,' cried Lettice, tossing her head and looking pretty enough not to require to do so.

'You had not much time for thinking about it, one way or the other; you married so young.'

'I did. I liked marrying young,' cried Lettice with a triumphant air. 'I wasn't nineteen! That *is* something, to be married before you're nineteen! And there's Lucy O'Brien and Katherine Lanens, and they're neither of them married yet, and it's more

than twenty-five they both are ; and my cousin Fanny did not marry till she was past thirty, and I'm *sure* Margaret will be an old maid.'

'And so you were determined to marry as soon as you could?' said Mrs. Donolly in doubtful, disapproving accents.

'No ; I was not,' cried Lettice, much more earnestly than was her wont. 'I was always *determined* not to marry—no, not the king himself, unless I was in love.'

Mrs. Donolly was surprised, but she looked at her pretty hostess with a good deal more sympathy than she had felt for her yet ; and in her sparkling eyes, and the lovely colour on her cheeks, she read that, whatever else Lettice might or might not be, she certainly was in love.

'There is nothing like love,' she said softly, almost reverently, 'if God is so good as to give it to us.'

Lettice opened her blue eyes and stared at her.

'That *is* a new way of viewing it,' said she.

'New?'

'Yes. It is not much about that we're thinking when we're being courted. Of course everybody knows God gives everything ; but it's the last sort of time to think of that sort of thing in.'

'Is it?' said Mrs. Donolly quietly. 'Well, I should have thought it the first sort of time.'

'My dear Mrs. Donolly! what, when one is being courted!'

'Then why is one married in a church?' persisted the other.

'Why, everybody is!' cried Lettice, greatly astonished.

'Yes, exactly; everybody is, and with such a solemn service—vows, and prayers, and blessings. Nothing that ever happens to one is so solemn; why is that?'

'Why, it's in the Prayer-Book,' cried Lettice, 'and it's the law. One can't help it, one *has* to do it, one could not be married without.'

'Yes, but why?' repeated Mrs. Donolly.

Lettice reflected.

'And I'm sure I don't know why,' she said at last. 'I never gave it a thought; why should I? It's the law, and that's all about it; and it's very nice, too, I think.'

'Did you ever read about marriage in the Bible?'

'Did I ever? I am sure I don't know. I suppose I have, if there's anything to read. But that's neither here nor there—that's not much to do with *us*, has it? It's all so different now, isn't it? You seem to be very religious, Mrs. Donolly; and that is a thing I never knew about Mr. Tippington till after we were married. He is very religious too—he is,

indeed. He had said little things when he was courting me, you know; but somehow I did not think about them or understand him then, but I just remembered them afterwards. And the first evening he brought me home, and called Kitty in and read a chapter, and then knelt down and said ever so many long prayers out of a little book he keeps on purpose, I do declare you might have knocked me down with a feather.'

'And had you never been accustomed to family prayers, then?' asked Mrs. Donolly in tones of quite tender compassion.

'Deed I had not—not at my father's; and as to my aunt, she's quite fashionable—she is, I do assure you. And Mr. Tippington doesn't talk (neither do you, you know) like the pious people I've met, always ending up their speeches with piety, and seeming to think everybody but themselves wicked; so I never suspected him of being religious, I didn't, indeed.'

'Old Mr. and Mrs. Tippington are two of the best people I ever knew in my life,' said Mrs. Donolly, 'and I think they trained up their son to be very good too.'

'Good; yes, I suppose so,' cried Lettice with a half laugh.

'They are such good Christians,' was the reply. 'I always try to take pattern by them, and I do

hope my husband and I may be something like them when we are as old.'

'Do you?' said Lettice doubtfully. 'Well, it is three days I spent at the farm, and I don't want to be like them at all, and any way I don't like to think of being old. Perhaps when one will be as old as they are, it doesn't much matter *what* one's like; but they are not in the least genteel, and there's *nothing* fashionable about the way of living they have. I was quite disappointed, and it is all so very unlike anything I have been accustomed to,' and here Mrs. Tippington slid into her little lofty air, which she had forgotten in the interest of the foregoing conversation.

'Is Mr. Donolly pious too?' asked she abruptly after a few minutes' silence.

His wife laughed a little.

'He's a better Christian than I am, and I have just to try to be worthy of him,' cried she with the happy earnestness of a happy wife.

'Worthy!' murmured Lettice. 'I don't like worthy men. And are all the people in Clanmena good Christians?' asked Lettice in some alarm.

'We must not judge our neighbours,' said she, smiling. 'Some of us are worse, and some of us are better; but let us hope that all are on the right road, and will reach the same end in time.'

'Well, you are not in the least like what I thought

you were,' said Lettice naively; 'and such good dinners as you give, and everything in your house so nice, I had not the least notion you were pious.'

'I hope we are not extravagant,' said Mrs. Donolly a little gravely. 'We live well within our income, and it is not a large part of it goes to our household expenses.'

'Why, what does it go in, then?'' cried Lettice, astonished.

'Mr. Donolly thinks it right to give a deal of it in different ways to help our neighbours, and we take care never to trench upon *that* for anything else. If we exceed a little at any time in our butcher's and baker's bills, we make it out of *them* at another. I have a regular allowance for house expenses, and we never let ourselves go beyond it in the year. I hope,' she added anxiously, 'that we are *not* extravagant or self-indulgent.'

'My aunt,' said Lettice, 'spends every farthing that she has just in *living*, and you can't *think* what a comfortable plan it is. It is not as large an income she has as many people I know, and she *does* contrive to make such a show on it. She spends six weeks every year by the sea, and dresses most genteelly; and she has a sweet drawing-room and a page. When she is alone or only me with her, she does not care *how* she scrapes, not a bit; and then if anybody comes in, they know nothing about

it, but it's all as if she lived in the highest style. I never did see anybody make *so* much out of a little, or get *so* much good from it as my aunt does.'

'And yet,' said Mrs. Donolly gently, 'I am *sure* I should not like to live in that sort of a way.'

'Would you not?' cried Lettice with animation. 'Why, it's just the way I should like to live; it's better than any other at all, unless, of course, I could keep the style and the genteelness just the same when I was alone as when I wasn't. But sure,' she added thoughtfully, 'very few people *are* rich enough for *that*.'

While the two young wives were still talking, their husbands came into the room. At four o'clock dinners with busy men, the habit of sitting 'over the wine' does not prevail; but the friends had seen little of each other for some months, and had been glad to take the opportunity of having a chat which was afforded them by the departure of the ladies. There was a little constraint between them at first. Each felt that the dinner had not gone off very well, and each had his own rather uncomfortable, though different reflections on that subject. The important event of the marriage of one of them was not touched on; no remark was made about the new wife, with the exception of one pleasant, genial observation of Mr. Donolly's on her extraordinary beauty. But after this first little

constraint had passed away, they fell into talk about many subjects of mutual interest, which soon became quite easy and natural. It was Mr. Donolly at last who made the move, saying, as he looked at his watch, that he really had not a minute more to spare.

‘Now then, Mary, are you ready?’ cried he as they entered the room. ‘It’s the height of bad manners, I’m afraid, Mrs. Tippington, to run away just as soon as we’ve finished our dinners; but business is business and must be attended to, and I never do neglect mine any more than my friend here does his,’ and he put his hand quite affectionately on Frank Tippington’s shoulder as he spoke.

‘I am sure I don’t know anything about business, Mr. Donolly,’ replied his hostess, closing her eyes with languid grace.

‘My wife does, then,’ answered Mr. Donolly rather shortly; ‘and she is of the greatest use to me, and what I should do without her I don’t know at all.’

Mrs. Donolly smiled and blushed, looking quite pretty as she did so, and at the same time returning her husband’s kind glance with one equally affectionate, if a little shy.

‘I suppose no husbands know what they will do without their wives,’ simpered Mrs. Tippington, still

keeping her eyes closed. 'At least, it's what they tell us over and over again, just to persuade us to consent to be their wives at all ; but Mr. Tippington never said I was to help in the shop.'

'And I don't wish you to help in the shop,' cried he stoutly.

'Deed, then, she might do worse,' said Mr. Donolly, 'and to my thinking a pretty, neat-handed woman never shows to greater advantage than behind a counter. However, that's neither here nor there. There are a hundred ways of helping a man in his business, Mrs. Tippington, without *that*. My Mary does not sell the wine for me—ha, ha, ha !' and he laughed merrily as he spoke, but neither his host nor his hostess appeared to see the joke.

Lettice looked as indignant as her languishing eyes would allow to become apparent, and Frank appeared immoveably serious.

'It's time everything takes, then, Brian,' interposed his wife good-naturedly. "'Rome wasn't built in a day," as I've heard my father say when we were any of us in a hurry, and sure I did not write invoices when I was nineteen,' and in all the superior steadiness of the twenty-five years, she smiled at Lettice with an almost motherly tenderness.

'But it's not that I look forward to,' cried Lettice, forgetting her affectation, and becoming really

animated ; 'it's to improve I want, not to go backward.'

'To improve ?' said Mrs. Donolly, puzzled.

'Yes, indeed. Everybody ought to improve as they go on and get older. To write invoices and be more shoppy, instead of less, is not *improving*. I don't mean to be more shoppy every year ; 'deed I do not, then. I do not look forward to writing invoices ; and as to nineteen and five-and-twenty, Mrs. Donolly, sure, by the time I'm that old, I do hope we shan't be living over the shop, but in a pretty villa with a gate and an avenue, and a bell to the door, and that Mr. Tippington will drive into his business every day in his own trap.'

She quite swelled with her sense of importance as she uttered the words, and glanced round her triumphantly for the approbations of the company. Frank's responsive glance was, however, a little doubtful, and he afterwards turned his eyes rather anxiously towards his friend's countenance.

'It's natural to wish to rise, of course,' he said in a low voice ; 'everybody likes *that*.'

But Mr. Donolly only laughed cheerily, and said :

'Bravo, Mrs. Tippington ! And there's nothing like ambition, is there, now ? But it is not the great hurry you ought to be in, either of you, and sure it won't come by the time you are five-and-twenty. It will not ; and it will come all the sooner, if you

give a helping hand in the business yourself. It will indeed, Frank,' he added, addressing his friend.

'Oh, we know that,' replied Frank, looking imploringly at Lettice, almost as if he would beg her to assume a virtue if she had it not.

'Why, my dear ma'am,' continued Mr. Donolly, turning again to the bride, 'your husband is a very fortunate fellow to be placed where he is, and be what he is, and he so young; and if ever a father did his duty by a son, it's his father did it by him; and it's a pretty penny it took to set him up in a shop, and buy a business for him in such a town as Clanmena—it did indeed. And he will rise; oh yes, he will get on in the world. But it's not by having a villa with an avenue, and driving his own trap by the time you are twenty-five, that it is to be done.'

'Well, I never did mean to marry a shop,' cried Lettice, tossing her pretty head disdainfully.

'Only it's yourself that *has* married one,' said Mr. Donolly sturdily; 'and if you'll take my advice, you'll make the best of it. And no such hard matter, young lady, for it is a very good nest you've got. What with your husband and your house, and your position in life, I don't see why any girl need wish for a better,' and as he spoke he gave her a hearty shake of the hand, and wished her good-bye,

looking full in her lovely face as he did so with an expression of very little satisfaction or approval.

But Mrs. Donolly took an exceedingly kind farewell of her, and not only asked but pressed her to come the next day to see her.

‘And come early,’ she said, ‘so as to be sure to find me at home. Come about twelve.’

Lettice was pleased at the invitation, and promised to avail herself of it.

‘It is very kind and friendly of you,’ she said, closing her eyes, ‘to let me do such an unfashionable thing as call before two o’clock. I’ll come with pleasure,’ and so Mr. and Mrs. Donolly took their departure arm in arm—a very comfortable couple.

Frank looked after them from the window, as they went down the street, with rather gloomy eyes.

‘There go two of the best people in the world,’ he said.

‘They—are,’ replied Lettice doubtfully. ‘I like *her*—I think I decidedly like her. She is odd; yes, she is odd, but then she is very genteel. She is the sort of woman who can afford to be odd, she is so very genteel.’

‘And don’t you like *him*?’

‘Well, I do not particularly.’

‘You do not? and pray, Lettice, why do not you like him particularly?’

'Sure I know you were old friends and all that ; I daresay he was a nice schoolboy. I'm no judge of schoolboys,—why should I be?—but I *am* a judge of gentlemen.'

'And suppose you are?'

'Well, then, he is *brusque*. There can't be a doubt of it, Frank. He is ex-ceed-ing-ly *brusque*, and that is a mistake ; there cannot be the shadow of a doubt that *brusqueness* is a mistake, at least where one is as *brusque* as Mr. Donolly.'

'I know nothing at all about brusqueness or mistakes,' said Frank stoutly, 'but I *do* know that Brian Donolly is as good a fellow as ever breathed, and that there is not a man on earth I have so strong an affection or respect for.'

Mrs. Tippington elevated her pretty eyebrows the least imaginable bit, and shrank back from her husband almost imperceptibly.

'And is there any occasion to talk so loudly about it?' she said. 'And why are you making a fuss?'

'I did not talk loud, and I am not making a fuss.'

'Really, now! How mistaken I was, then! Do you know, I thought you were.'

'Don't be provoking, Lettice. Don't vex me: I am a little vexed as it is; don't worry me, there's a good girl.'

'You are a little vexed! And what on earth will

you have to be vexed at?’ asked Lettice, quite astonished, and as she spoke she regarded her own pretty face and figure in the glass, as if she thought the fortunate possessor thereof had no business to be vexed at anything.

‘What will I have to vex me? Well, things are not quite as I should wish them to be. I was not contented at dinner’—

‘Not contented, and you had your own beloved pork chops!’ and Lettice’s eyes went up appealingly to the ceiling in wonder at the ingratitude of men.

‘Hang pork chops!’ cried Frank; ‘*that’s* not it. The dinner was good enough, but I like things clean and tidy,—my mother always has things clean and tidy,—and *that* tablecloth!’

‘Why do you ask people to dinner without giving me notice, then?’ said his wife sharply. ‘Had I time to get a tablecloth washed, pray? and if a tablecloth is not washed, how can it be clean?’

‘My mother’s tablecloths,’ began Frank, but Lettice put her pretty little hands up to her pretty little ears and cried for mercy.

‘Please, please,’ she said, ‘don’t always be tormenting me with your mother. I don’t believe even your mother’s tablecloths will be clean without washing.’

‘But we have six tablecloths—six tablecloths that I bought and paid for!’ persisted her husband loudly;

'and if one is in use and two every week at the wash, I can't see why there are not three always in the linen drawer ready for any emergency.'

'Three tablecloths in a linen drawer ready for any emergency!' laughed Mrs. Tippington. 'It sounds like the beginning of a game. It's not alliterative, or it would be reminding me of the two tired travellers trying to trot to Tutbury, that I was so fond of when I was a child. Oh dear me, how much men *do* know about housekeeping, to be sure!'

Mr. Tippington looked rather blank, and as if he was not quite sure that he had not made himself ridiculous.

'I don't see why there *will* not be three tablecloths,' he said, but not with as much decision as he had spoken before.

'In a drawer ready for any emergency,' added his wife.

Again Mr. Tippington looked a little doubtful as to his position.

'All I know is, that it is very disagreeable not to have a clean tablecloth on the table when one asks a friend to dinner,' said he.

'And all I know is, that it is very disagreeable to be always found fault with about everything, and never to please anybody,' retorted Lettice, pouting.

Now Lettice looked extremely pretty when she pouted.

'Nobody finds fault with you, and you please everybody,' said poor Frank, beginning to feel as if he was in the wrong.

'I wonder who would think so who saw and heard,' murmured Lettice, still pouting.

'Who saw and heard what?'

'You!'

'What on earth do you mean? What do I do?'

'I mean *that*, and you are quite aware what you do.'

'Sure you know well enough, Lettice, that you seem to despise everything and to find nothing good enough for you. I ask yourself, *is* that pleasant for a man?'

'I don't.'

'You do.'

'It's you.'

'I?' cried he, amazed. 'Deed I never was so comfortable in my life, and should *like* the shop and think the rooms as nice as possible if you did not look down on them all.'

'But you know,' said Lettice pensively, 'I never did mean to marry a shop.'

'And what will I do?' cried her husband; 'what *can* I do? You *have* married me, I *do* keep a shop, and I'm afraid I am too old to change. I

don't see how I could take to anything else. How could I?

'Well, I don't suppose you could.'

'I could not; then why not try to make the best of it, Lettice? You said yourself it was a very—*genteel*—business.'

Mr. Tippington uttered the word 'genteel' with some reluctance, and as if he did not like it, but by a heroic effort and for his wife's sake conquered a natural manly repugnance.

'And don't I make the best of it?' cried she. 'And if I said *that*, is not it making [the best of it? And how could I ever make the best of it more than by saying it was genteel, I wonder?'

'That's true, of course,' said Frank; 'but still'—

'Oh, but still!' cried she; 'but still what, you that must have your grievance, and your grievance against poor me?'

'I am sure Donolly did not like the way you talked about the shop,' said her husband rather ruefully.

'Did not he really? You don't say so? And what will we do then?' cried she mockingly. 'And to let you into a secret, Frank,—don't tell; whatever you do, don't tell,—*I* did not like the way in which *Donolly* talked about the shop. No, I did not—not the least little bit in the world!'

'It was only the truth he spoke,' replied Mr.

Tippington rather more stoutly than he had been speaking latterly ; ' for it *was* a great exertion my father made to set me up in it, and it is a good business if ever there was one ; and everybody *did* think it a great piece of luck for a young man like me to get it. And then it fell vacant just at the right moment, and he was able to buy it, good-will and all.'

' And it's myself that is sick to death of it, and of everything about it, and everybody connected with it,' cried Lettice with an espiegle glance and an air of pretty spite. ' O shop, shop ! O luck, luck ! O Donolly, Donolly ! Don't let me hear any more about any of them. Give me a little respite just for half an hour—do, now. Sure, if you're a good man, you'll just steal for me one of those nice story-books out of the SHOP. And you'll read me a bewitching story while I work at your slippers—*your* slippers, you know, Frank : it is for *you* I am embroidering them. And while we are so pleasantly employed, I shall find that married life's a little, just a little like what I used to imagine it long ago.'

As she uttered these words, she turned towards him with a coquettish smile and glance, and with saucy eyes full of gentleness and laughter ; and she looked so pretty that there was nothing left for the young husband to do but to give her a kiss, and, fetching the nice story-book she had commanded, sit

down by her side in the chair which she despised, but which Mr. Donolly thought so comfortable, and read it aloud to her. And so employed, with a pretty young wife by his side, Frank forgot all his grievances.





CHAPTER IV.

ANOTHER COUPLE.

MEANTIME Mr. and Mrs. Donolly walked home together arm in arm, looking, as we have said before, like one of the most comfortable couples imaginable—comfortable couple as far as their mutual relation was concerned, most certainly. After the first pleasant word or two had been exchanged, inevitable between married people who love each other when, having spent a few hours in company, they find themselves once more *tête-à-tête*, Mr. Donolly fell into thought, and his knit brows and compressed lips showed plainly that his reflections were of rather a sombre character.

So serious, indeed, did he appear to be, that after a little silence his Mary said softly, 'Is there anything the matter, Brian?'

He quite started, his thought had been so deep,

and looked inquiringly into his wife's fair, pleasant face.

'Is there anything the matter?' cried he. 'Well, then, not very much, except that it occurs to me that for a sensible man our very good friend Frank Tippington is a most consummate ass.'

'O Brian! Mr. Tippington! you can't mean it! What *do* you mean?'

'I do mean it, my dear; and *what* I mean is, that no one but an ass would have married that senseless little bit of affectation and conceit—set her up with her fine airs and her marrying shops! Why, a shop is a hundred times too good for her. It would be no end of use to my lady to have a broom in one hand and a dust-pan in the other, and to turn housemaid for a couple of years, just to show her what being the wife of a good honest tradesman like my friend Frank, who keeps her like a lady, really is.'

'She is so extremely pretty,' began Mrs. Donolly in an apologetic manner, but her husband interrupted her.

'She is. She is pretty enough, but it is not beauty we are talking about. Does a sensible man in our rank of life marry a pretty face? Serve him right, say I, to get such a wife as she is if he does. Why, look here, Mary,' continued he with honest warmth, '*your* face is worth twenty of such a pretty piece of painted wax-work as that. It's your face has got

something in it ; and yet it was not for your face that I married you, and I should scorn myself if it was.'

Mrs. Donolly's hand that rested on her husband's arm gently pressed it.

'What *was* it for, dear?' she asked with a low, happy laugh.

'What was it for? I'll tell you, my lass, what it was for. It's not that I'm going to deny how the first time I ever set eyes on you, I liked your looks and your smiles, and got warm about the heart as I thought how you'd brighten up a man's home for him, and make his life beautiful. But it wasn't for that I married you; it was not. I *watched* you after I liked you, to see if you'd be a good wife. And it was for your care of the old father, and your pleasant answers to the cross brother, and your love for the little sisters—yes, and for your early rising and your light step about the house, and your bright sunny ways, that I married you. It was you had the gift of setting everything right that went wrong, and it was I that loved you for it; and I say, that tradesman is a fool who marries a wife for any other reasons than the likes of these.'

Yes, Brian Donolly, you are quite right, and you might have said that gentleman also.

'But you were *in love* with me, Brian, you know you were?' cried Mary, laughing and blushing and speaking in almost a reproachful voice.

‘In love with you, my lass? Of course I was in love with you,’ cried her husband heartily. ‘Who could help being in love with your ways, and with you for them? Sure I never was in such a taking in all my days as when I was not certain whether you would have me or no. My life would be spoiled if you didn’t, and I could not make up my mind that you would; and I was nearly turning coward, ’deed I was, and not asking you at all, just because I knew it was you that might say “No!” But I have never sneaked yet, and I said to myself, “Donolly, don’t sneak now!” and so I up and asked you, and you’—

‘Oh yes, I know all about that,’ cried Mary, shutting his mouth with a kiss, for by that time they had reached their house in the square, and were behind the shelter of their own door; and safe in this privacy Brian Donolly heartily returned his wife’s embrace, and then putting his arm round her waist, ran rapidly up-stairs with her into their pleasant sitting-room.

‘What a mercy there is not a corner cupboard in it!’ cried he, throwing a droll glance round the apartment. ‘Sure you could not sit in it, Mary, if there was one, could you?’

‘Don’t be censorious, sir,’ replied Mary, laughing; ‘don’t be censorious and satirical. I’ll tell you what it is, Brian; I’m thinking there’s more good in that

pretty little thing than you have found out yet ; and you are forgetting how young she is. Why, she is only nineteen !'

'She is old enough to be my friend's wife,' replied Brian gravely ; 'and it's a good wife or a bad wife that she's old enough to make him, and to pull him up or to push him down. Oh, Frank, Frank, what a fool you have been !'

'She has sometimes a very sweet expression in her eyes, and she is fond of him ; and as he is a good sensible man, he may make anything of her in a little time—he may indeed,' said Mrs. Donolly.

'But what a helpmate for a good sensible man to choose !' said Brian regretfully.

'She is pretty and young and fresh, and when she is not thinking about herself she is nice, and he loves her, and I do think she has enough good in her to improve.'

'But she is so genteel,' said Mr. Donolly, putting his hands before him in an affected manner and caricaturing Mrs. Tippington's mincing speech till his wife laughed heartily, boxed his ears, and once more desired him not to be satirical.

'It is no laughing matter, then, and it is sorry I am,' he said when they were grave again. 'I *am* sorry about it ; I have not a friend I value more than I do Frank Tippington, but I know his faults,

and sure he knows mine, and it's not in the hands of a woman like that I'd see him.'

'Is not she more in his hands? You can hardly call him in her hands, or her a woman either, can you?' answered his wife soothingly. 'And they have not had time to shake up and settle down, indeed they have not. Be patient, my dear. Frank has the stronger character of the two; why should not his influence be the greater?'

'Because she *is* a woman, and unfortunately he is only a man,' said Brian, making a long face and dodging his head as if afraid of another blow from his wife's hands.

'It's incorrigible you are,' she said, 'and I find as much trouble, I am sure, in managing my husband as ever he can in managing his wife. But be serious, Brian; confess now it is not like you to be in such a hurry to judge? Any way, it is not charitable; and when you are judging a young girl placed in a new position, and surrounded by new circumstances that she hardly knows how to deal with, it is almost unkind and unfair.'

'A corner cupboard being one of those circumstances! Come, Mary, forgive me for that last fling, and do not be vexed. You are quite right, little woman, as you always are, and I will not be in a hurry to condemn Frank's wife; only, you see, affectation and airs do always set my back up; and to find

my very good friend despised by his own wife, and she such a nonsensical little piece of goods, *does* provoke me. And I thought he cut rather a poor figure in his own house to-day; I did, indeed.'

'I don't know that. I'm not sure about that. I did like the way in which he stood up for farm-houses and all that belongs to them. It was manly, and it was tender. Sure it brought the tears into my eyes when I thought of the dear old father and mother.'

'Deed, then, Frank won't give up his own people. It's the wrong tack she'll find she's on, if she tries *that*. But one thing I *am* afraid of, and that is, that she'll spend his money and make him spend it too. Set her up with villas, avenues, and traps!'

'Oh, that was just a pretty picture, nothing more. All girls make pretty pictures, just of what they would *like*; but for all that, they settle down soon enough, and are content with what they *get*.'

'Pray, then, did *you* ever make any of those pretty pictures, Mistress Mary?'

'I?' cried she, laughing. 'Of course I did. Let me see now, what were they? Listen, then. I used to long for a little greenhouse up in the air like a box, for that back window to open into, and to fancy what dear wee bits of flowers I should have there; and I used to wish very much indeed to go to London.'

‘And whatever you wish very much indeed shall be done, my darling, sooner or later,’ said Brian Donolly; ‘and the next time we take a holiday, to London we’ll go, and nowhere else, see if we don’t,’ and he brought his fist heavily down on the table as he spoke, with the air of a man who meant what he said.

‘Oh, how delightful!’ cried his wife; ‘and is not it good and kind that you are to me?’ and she kissed him. ‘And now, dear, first give me my work-box; I am going to put new linen wristbands on your shirts. Will I give you those papers I had yesterday to sort, and you see if they are all right, and then put them in proper order with the others? You had better do it at once, hadn’t you? Let me get my stitching and sit by you while you do it, and we will have one of our happy bits, and enjoy ourselves completely. I can help when you want me, and work between whiles; and we have a good busy hour before us, till the time comes for the chapter and prayers.’

Brian gave her the workbox, and produced the papers, and, sitting down together, they were soon busily and happily employed—never too busy to exchange little occasional words with each other, and never so happy as when they were exchanging them, but never neglecting their work on that account.

Mary looked so bright, and sweet, and home-like,

that Brian felt the pleasant influence of her womanly presence in every breath he drew, and with half a sigh given to the recollection of his friend's different fate, blessed his good fortune from the bottom of his honest heart for having given him such a wife.

'Now, don't you think you might sing to me?' said he after half an hour's work. 'I have only to tie up the packets. You could sing me a song while I am doing that.'

'And what shall I sing, then?' asked she, smiling.

'Any of your pretty ballads, something refreshing. What was that about sorrowful days? Oh, "The Sorrowful Days." I have not heard you sing that for a long time. It was a pretty song, and it had a pretty moral too. I am thinking nothing is quite what it should be unless it has a moral in it, if we take the trouble of looking for it.'

'Yes, I know the song you mean,' said Mary Donolly, and, in a voice bright and bird-like as herself, she sang the following simple ditty. She kept tune perfectly, and, if her voice was not powerful, it was sweet, and with a pathetic ring in it that went to the heart of most listeners.

MARY'S SONG.

Sorrowful days that flit and fly,
Sorrowful days that come again,
Hearts that break with never a sigh,
Hearts that die in a silent pain.
Oh, the sorrowful days!

Very Genteel.

Suns that set with never a moon,
 Suns that rise where the light is not,
 Flowers faded, birds out of tune,
 Faith dishonour'd and love forgot.
 Oh, the sorrowful days !

Sorrowful days that need not be,
 Never a heart was made for woe,
 Light is shining for you and me,
 If we will only have it so
 In the sorrowful days.

Light is shining for every one,
 God's own light from this earth of ours,
 Much more beautiful than the sun,
 Sweeter than birds, brighter than flowers,
 In the sorrowful days.

'Of all your songs, it is that which is almost my favourite,' said Brian with a loving look at his wife as the last note passed out of her lips and died away on the air. 'And I do suppose that you have not an idea why?'

Mrs. Donolly laughed. 'And why do you suppose that?' asked she.

'Why? Tell me now, *do* you know?'

'Is it because it is a pretty song in itself?'

'No, it is not,' he replied almost triumphantly.

'Not a pretty song?' she asked with affected simplicity. 'Dear me, I am sorry then that I sang it. Why *did* you ask for it?'

'It *is* a pretty song, but that is not my reason for liking it so much. And you don't know what my reason is, Mistress Mary?'

‘Do I not? Why do not I, Brian?’

‘Because I have a picture in my mind connected with that song, which rises up whenever you sing it. And I have a particular love for it on account of the picture, over and above what I feel for itself.’

‘And I suppose I have not a notion what that picture is?’

‘No. Shall I tell you, Mary?’

‘No. Shall I tell you, Brian?’

‘You cannot, my dear, but you certainly may if you can.’

Mrs. Donolly laughed quite roguishly.

‘It is a picture of a nice room,’ she said, ‘with a crimson carpet, and grey walls, and white muslin curtains; and an old lady, a dear old lady, in an arm-chair; and a slip of a girl sitting in the window, a girl of twenty or so, in a brown silk dress, and the girl is singing that very song, “Oh, the Sorrowful Days;” and a young man comes in at the door behind her, and listens, while she does not know he is there, and the old lady does not know he is there either; but when the girl finishes it, “Oh, the Sorrowful Days,” the old lady gets up, and comes across to her and gives her a kiss, and the young man says—what does he say, Brian?’

‘Bravo, mother!’ cries Mr. Donolly, imitating the old lady in the narrated picture, and bestowing a hearty kiss on his wife’s blushing cheek. ‘He says

"Bravo, mother!" but only to think of your remembering all that just the same as I do.'

'Yes; why should not I? It was more to me than it was to you even. It was the first time I ever sang to your mother, and I did so wish her to love me. And it was the first kiss she ever gave me, except just the morning and evening kiss, that she could not help giving me; for she does not kiss everybody, you know, Brian, as some people do,' and she laughed a little.

'She does not. Her kisses *mean* something, and they mean a good deal when she gives them to you,' said Brian kindly; 'but I never knew that you had thought about it so much, Mary.'

'There are a great many things men do *not* know, dear,' laughed Mary, 'though they do believe themselves to be so much cleverer and more learned than poor little women.'

'It seems to me that poor little women are rather conceited sometimes.'

'Now just see that!' cried Mrs. Donolly; 'it is the *women* that are conceited, not the *men*, is it? You surprise me, Brian!'

'Which do you consider thinks most of themselves, Frank or his wife?' asked he.

Mrs. Donolly laughed. 'Take my word for it, Brian, that girl is better than you think her, and will turn out better.'

'You are very determined in that opinion?'

'I am. Wait just, and see if I am not right. I know more about girls than you do, and I do not despair of her one bit. I do not, indeed. You will find she will make your friend a good wife yet.'

'It will be a precious long time first, I expect.'

'It seems to me you are showing almost as low an opinion of him as of her. They love each other very much, at any rate; and will that go for nothing? Will he have no influence over her? and will he not use his influence for good? Have a little faith in your friend, Brian, if you have none in your friend's wife.'

Mr. Donolly, thus adjured by his wife, who was quite eager on the subject, rubbed his left eyebrow with the forefinger of his right hand, as it was his custom to do when in any perplexity.

'Frank is a good fellow—a capital fellow,' he said slowly; 'but I know Frank Tippington's faults, as he knows mine, and I don't see how he is to set about reforming his wife. Did it look like it at dinner?'

'Oh, it is early days yet, and we were by.'

'And as to that little chit loving him, to tell you the truth, Mary, I think she is too much in love with herself to have much leisure to love anybody else.'

'But that is not fair. I *know* she loves him.'

'Did she tell you so?'

‘No, no, Brian ; and I did not tell her that I loved you ! But I *saw* it ; I *saw* it deep down in her eyes. She loves him, and she is very young, and it is hard if a man cannot make almost what he likes of a young wife that—loves him.’

‘Vanity and self-engrossment harden the heart, Mary. There is no armour more difficult to pierce than the armour of self-engrossment ; and self-engrossed people are so utterly blind : they view things and persons merely as they relate to themselves, forgetting things and persons have relations to any one else, and even forgetting their own relations to them.’

‘Wait and see, wait and see,’ smiles his wife, and then she sang sweetly a verse from the old song :

‘Judge as you would be judged by others,
Love as you would have others love,
Act as if men were only brothers,
And bring a blessing from above.’

The next day rose brightly over the little town and pleasant country that surrounded it. The sun poured its rays into Lettice’s room, and woke her from the sound slumber of youth and health. She was very merry at breakfast, laughing and chatting and making herself as agreeable to her husband as possible ; and his spirits rose with hers, and he felt happier and more contented then, in a vague unconscious way, than he had done for some time.

After breakfast, she dressed herself becomingly enough. Her white straw hat with blue riband and forget-me-nots was really pretty, and she wore a fresh blue muslin dress and black silk scarf. She took her mother-of-pearl card-case—a wedding present—in one hand, and her fawn-coloured embroidered parasol in the other, and after a well satisfied gaze and smile into her mirror, she set off in good looks and good spirits to call on Mrs. Donolly.

She ran first, however, for a moment into the shop, just to show herself to her husband, who, seated at his desk in the background, was busy over his account-books. He looked at her with undisguised pleasure and satisfaction, and wished that he was an idle man, who could stroll about with his wife in the morning.

‘Don’t expect me till you see me,’ she cried; ‘for after I have paid my visit, it is likely I may take a walk. The day is lovely. Summer has come, and it is wicked to waste summer in a street.’

‘All right,’ said he; ‘but if you’ll tell me which way you’ll come home, maybe I’ll try to meet you.’

‘Which way is it? Well, let me see. The square lies at the end of the town, does it not, close to the fir wood? I will go through the wood, and round by the walk in the Castle grounds, and so home by the Clonakilty road—that walk you took me to hear the cuckoo; you remember, don’t you?’

'I do ; it is a nice walk, and it is not too far. There is not much work I find to do here to-day, and if I can manage to get off anyhow, I'll come out and meet you.'

'*Au revoir*,' cried Lettice, kissing her hand gaily to him. She was rather fond of airing her French when an opportunity offered, and Frank did not at all dislike to hear foreign phrases slip from between her pretty lips.

Then she tripped out of the shop and along the streets, giving little glances from side to side, as young ladies are rather in the habit of doing who are well dressed and well looking, and considerably occupied by the knowledge of these two important facts—important, it must be supposed, to themselves, if not to the rest of the world, though we by no means wish to say that pretty faces and pretty dresses are things to be despised.

Mrs. Donolly was at home as she had promised to be, and received her guest in her pleasant sitting-room, without any corner cupboard in it. The square was undoubtedly a much more 'genteel' place to live in than the High Street. Mr. Donolly's house, moreover, was gentility itself, undisgraced by any shop, the wine vaults being in High Street ; and Lettice's mind was divided between regret that her own surroundings were so much less genteel,

and pleasure at finding herself in the possession of such genteel friends.

Mrs. Donolly met her with her usual bright cordiality when she had been ushered into the room by a neat little parlour-maid, whose dress was set off by the cleanest of white caps and aprons.

'I am so glad you have come; and it is good of you to be so early.'

'It was rather an effort,' replied Lettice with her sweetest closure of the eyes; 'but I liked making it, I liked coming.'

Then Mary called forward a sweet, charming little dumpling, with large Irish-blue eyes, and a head covered with flaxen curls, aged about four years, who had been sitting on a stool at her mother's feet.

'This is our only little one,' said she, kissing her. 'She has been delicate almost all her short young life. Anxiety and care for her has been the only trial God has sent us since we married.'

Lettice kissed her too. She was fond of children. 'But, surely,' she cried, 'she is not sickly now? She is a plump, rosy little darling.'

'She is growing stronger every day,' replied the young mother tenderly and proudly.

'It must be dreadful having to nurse anybody, said Lettice with an affected little shiver, 'and a sick child especially. Does not illness make them very fretful?' and her voice seemed to express that a

fretful child was more than any one could be expected to endure. Without agreeing altogether with our heroine, we may perhaps be permitted to say that a fretful child *is* a very disagreeable thing.

'Poor little pet,' replied Mary, her hand resting on the tiny curls, 'sometimes, of course, she might be—children don't understand the *meaning* of being ill; and it is *much* more difficult to train them, because it's then they are naughty without being naughty, and you don't know whether to pass it over or make a fuss. But nursing brings its own sweetness with it, and is a very precious thing, and I assure you that now she is growing stronger I sometimes feel almost frightened lest a worse trial should come instead.' Here she paused a moment, and gave a little sigh, adding, 'But we are in the hands of our Father, and *know* that all is for the best.'

'I don't think sickness ever could be for the best,' replied Lettice, settling her dress in becoming folds about her, as she sank gracefully into a chair, and glancing meantime at the opposite mirror to see how her hat looked, and biting her lips to make them redder than red. 'It is such a horrid thing. I am sure I never *could* nurse a sick person.'

'Oh yes, you could,' smiled Mrs. Donolly; 'wait till you are tried. And bad health or illness always seems to come so straight from God—more perhaps than

any other trial. I don't mean, of course, that all is not sent from Him, but one seems to see it plainer with sickness than with almost anything else.'

'Sure, how can that be,' cried Lettice, opening her pretty eyes wide in genuine astonishment, 'when you catch illnesses—nasty things—from men and women, yes, and I do believe even from cats? At least, my aunt used always to have a cold after her cat had one, and I was persuaded she caught it from her. Certainly the cat slept with her,' she added thoughtfully, 'and that might account for it.'

Little Miss Donolly, sitting on her stool at her mother's feet, listened to the conversation as children will, and now put in her remark in lisping accents.

'I dot a tat,' said she.

'Have you, my dear?' replied Lettice. 'Don't kiss it when it has a cold, then. How old is she, Mrs. Donolly?'

'She was four last month.'

'Me sall be five next time,' interrupted the little lady; 'how old is 'ou?'

Both the young women laughed.

'I am more than nineteen. I shall be twenty next time, Miss Inquisitive,' answered Lettice.

'Ou welly pitty,' said the child, staring up into her face; 'me tiss 'ou,' and she suited the action to the word.

Lettice laughed, blushed, and looked pleased. She

was young enough and vain enough to like being told she was very pretty even by a child of four years old. Then the two ladies chatted a little about various things, Lettice beginning to feel at her ease, and finding with some surprise how much she liked Mrs. Donolly.

Some pretty water-colour drawings hung framed on the walls of the room, and her opinion of her new friend was raised still higher when she discovered that it was she who had painted them. Mrs. Donolly gladly told her the subjects. One was her old unmarried home; others sketches of places near it. One or two represented scenes in Wales, where Mr. Donolly had taken her during the honeymoon.

Lettice's quick eyes took in all the adornments of the room with a view to receiving hints for making 'home' not 'happy' but 'genteel,' and perhaps there are more married men in the world than Mr. Tippington who are aware that the two things are very different and sometimes incompatible. While looking about her, she saw a child's frock half made lying on the table. It was at once too small and of too coarse a material to appear to be intended for Mrs. Donolly's little girl; so she took it up rather curiously and inquired what it was. She was informed that it was work being prepared for a Dorcas meeting.

'A Dorcas meeting!' exclaimed Lettice, again astonished; 'what's Dorcas?'

'It is a meeting for making clothes to sell cheap for poor people.'

'Is it really? What an odd thing! And *why* should it be called Dorcas?' persisted Lettice.

"There was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas," said Mrs. Donolly with a little kindly smile; 'you know now, don't you?'

'Deed I do not, then. Joppa! Disciple! Oh, is it something out of the Bible? How very queer, but I do *not* know, or else I forget.'

'Well, it goes on to say "she was full of good works and alms-deeds which she did," and she dies—you remember now, don't you, Mrs. Tippington?—she dies, and the widows stand by weeping and showing the coats and garments that Dorcas made while she was with them. And so, you see, when women meet to make clothes for the poor, it is called a Dorcas meeting.'

'Oh! but I don't like it at all,' cried Lettice. "'She dies, and all the rest of them are widows and weeping." That is very melancholy. I hate everything about death; it is shocking, it makes me shudder.'

'Does it? It may be melancholy, but I do not think it is shocking. And listen,' cried Mary with one of her brightest smiles; 'you will like *this*, I am sure, for she—this good Dorcas—comes to life again, and just think how glad all those weeping widows

must have been! Peter kneels down by her and prays, and says, "Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up. . . . And when he had called the saints and widows, he presented her alive." *That* is not melancholy, is it?'

'It must have been a horrid thing to see, and would have frightened me to death,' said Lettice. 'I think when she had once done it, they had much better have left her alone. But really now, Mrs. Donolly, do you know the whole Bible by heart?'

Mary laughed gaily.

'I wish I did,' she said. 'But I do know a great deal of it; and oh, the pleasure and the comfort that I often find it! When my wee darling there was born,' and again the kind hand rested lovingly on the little head, 'my eyes were weak for a long time, and I don't know what I should have done if I had not had the Bible in my heart.'

'But who taught you? How did you learn?'

'My mother went to a school when she was young where they made all the children learn the Bible by rote every day—just as much as they could in a given time; so that made every one anxious to learn more than the others. And my mother brought us up the same way, and I am sure that I am very glad she did.'

'And *did* she belong to a Dorcas meeting too?' asked Lettice almost discontentedly.

‘She did not. I don’t know if there were any Dorcas meetings when she was young, and after she was married, she lived in a backward country place where there certainly were not. But I have been a member of the one here ever since I came, and I like it very much.’

‘Sure you don’t *like* it?’

‘Indeed I do; and I hope you will join us too, Mrs. Tippington.’

‘I? My *dear* Mrs. Donolly, what an idea! how could I? What should I do among you all? You are all a great deal too good for me—I should be lost; and to make such coarse things! How *could* I make such coarse things?’ and Lettice sank back in her chair quite exhausted by the mere notion, and relapsing into that affected manner which was fast becoming natural to her, but which she was always forgetting in Mrs. Donolly’s presence, looked affectionately down on her pretty little hands arrayed in delicate light-coloured kid gloves.

But Mrs. Donolly only laughed.

‘Do just as you choose,’ she said with perfect good humour; ‘but I wish you would give us a trial. You need not stay with us, you know, if you don’t like us; but I think you will like us. We have all ranks. There are ourselves,—the trading community, you know,—the clergyman’s daughter, and the doctor’s wife, and Miss Cochrane who lives in the house with

the large garden you can see from these windows ; and the young ladies from the Castle look in sometimes.'

'Not really, now?—not the young ladies from the Castle?' cried Lettice, greatly impressed. 'Sure it must be quite a genteel sort of thing, then ; is not it, Mrs. Donolly? I do admire the Miss Hopes. How *beautifully* they always are dressed on Sundays in church! That lace on Miss Agatha Hope's bonnet cannot have cost less than seven-and-sixpence a yard, I am sure of it ; and I ought to know pretty well if any one ought, for my aunt was quite *entêtée* about lace, and had such lovely bits herself, yards upon yards of it—the real thing, you know ; so that I do understand it when I see it, and what it is worth. And then the other one's sash. Such a pretty girl the other one is! I never saw such hair in my life,' and Lettice looked approvingly at her own piles of frizzled gold reflected in the mirror opposite her as she spoke. 'But as to her sash, I do assure you, my dear Mrs. Donolly, that the sash she had on last Sunday was as broad as—as—that hearth-rug of yours, and worn in such a *dégagée* way—so elegant—up one side and down the other. I was looking at it for ever so long as she stood up in her pew, just to see how it was done, and I tried to do up a riband of mine exactly like it the first thing on Monday morning!'

‘They are always very nicely dressed young ladies,’ said Mary in rather a constrained voice and a slightly uncomfortable manner, ‘and very nice-looking too.’

‘But your pew is just behind theirs, so you have a much better view of them than I have, and must have noticed it all,’ cried Lettice, delighted, and sitting up with sudden animation. ‘There’s no doubt, then, that you can tell me how the sash *was* put on.’

‘Indeed, I cannot,’ replied Mrs. Donolly, looking quite distressed. ‘I was not thinking about it. I saw they had blue bonnets on, that was all.’

‘And you did not even notice the lace,’ said Lettice, ‘the beautiful lace as wide as half my finger, and that cost seven-and-sixpence a yard if it cost a penny?’

‘I did not.’

‘It’s a pity. I don’t see the use of having a pew in such a genteel situation as yours, Mrs. Donolly, if you notice nothing,’ said Lettice, making a well-bred effort to conceal her contempt. ‘But of course some people have *no* observation ; however, I’ll take it as quite a favour if you’ll look at the sash if she wears it next Sunday, and let me know if you can find out just what it does when it crosses under the top turning.’

Mrs. Donolly coloured a good deal and looked quite embarrassed, and Lettice began to laugh.

‘I see how it is!’ she cried ; ‘you have found out

all about it, and done up a sash for yourself, and now you don't like to tell *me* lest it should get common. Oh, Mrs. Donolly, I have found you out; but never mind, I don't. It is all fair. My aunt has done the same thing just fifty times over.'

'But indeed it is not that.'

'Is it not? What is it, then?'

'Why, only—we do *not* go to church to notice people's dresses,' replied Mrs. Donolly very gently, almost timidly.

'Oh, do not we?' said Lettice slowly and rather confounded. Then recovering herself, she added in a very affected manner, 'You can't form an idea of how such things are done at watering-places and in gen-teel society.'

'But *church* is the same way everywhere, and to everybody,' urged Mary anxiously.

'Then why do we put on our best dresses, and think of nothing all the week but to get ourselves up smart for Sundays, pray?'

retorted Lettice.

'We put on nice clothes in honour of the day, but not that we may think about them. It is a pity to wear things so unusually smart that we think about them, is not it?'

'Oh, do not ask me; I know nothing about it at all. It is all news to me, I think, that I hear in Clanmena. I am a great deal too wicked for Clanmena, I suppose, and I cannot tell whether I will be able

to join the Dorcas meetings ; they may be rather nice, I think.'

'I shall be very glad if you will join them,' said Mrs. Donolly gently.

'I'll speak to Mr. Tippington and I'll let you know,' said Lettice with considerable grandeur of manner. 'When did you say they are held?'

'They are held every second Thursday, and next Thursday is the day.'

'Very well, I'll see what I can do. I'll venture to promise to look in next Thursday any way ; and then, if I like them, I'll come when I can. I'll speak to Mr. Tippington about it. Do you admit gentlemen?' with an affected laugh.

'Indeed we do not. What would they do with themselves, poor things, and we so busy with our fingers?'

'It's true that men are in the way sometimes, though we don't begin to feel it till we are married,' said Lettice thoughtfully.

'The clergymen do come occasionally, Mr. Scott and Mr. Falconer. Mr. Scott is our rector, you know, Mrs. Tippington, and Mr. Falconer is his curate.'

'They are both very well in their way,' replied Lettice kindly. 'Mr. Scott has a fine forehead of his own, and Mr. Falconer is quite the gentleman.'

'They read aloud to us sometimes ; but no other gentleman is admitted.'

'I was glad Mr. Tippington belonged to the Church people and not to the Presbyterians,' said Lettice; 'the Church is a great deal more genteel. Church ministers are gentlemanly, and Presbyterian ministers are not. I really think the Church is very genteel, don't you?'

Mrs. Donolly made no reply to this question, at least no direct reply, but in return asked a question, which was, whether Mrs. Tippington's parents had been Church people or Presbyterian.

'Oh, Church,' said she; 'we always were for the Church. Not that I know what my mother was. I was too young when she died to remember her; and for that matter my father goes nowhere,' here she simpered a little. 'Gentlemen often don't, you know, Mrs. Donolly; it is very naughty of them, but they don't, and I don't see how it can always be expected of them either.'

'I am so sorry for you,' said Mary, looking very kindly and earnestly at the foolish, pretty young creature, who could not remember her mother, and whose father 'went nowhere,' that is to say, he did not attend any place of worship. There was an expression of genuine compassion and regret in her eyes as she spoke. Lettice stared in surprise, no less genuine at finding herself an object of compassion.

'My aunt always made a point of going to the

most fashionable church wherever she was,' cried she emphatically; 'and when she went to a watering-place in the season—and my aunt always went to watering-places *in the season*. She had no opinion at all of *that* way of saving money, going to places out of the season for cheapness' sake. "What appearance can you make by *that*?" I've heard her ask over and over again, when she was talking of ways of saving money, and hugglety-mugglety people recommended *that* as a good one. But what I was saying is, that when she went to a watering-place, the first things she made a point of doing were, to subscribe to the best circulating library for novels, and to take a good sitting in the most fashionable church. I never knew her fail in that, never, and she always said she got as much as she gave for it.'

'And I suppose,' replied Mrs. Donolly in a very kind manner, 'you lived always either with your father or with your aunt?'

'Except when I was at school,' said Lettice. 'I was at a most gen-teel school in Belfast, and I used to spend my holidays either with my father or my aunt. I had only left school—it was only six months I had left school when I met—Frank,' and as she uttered the last word with a lingering shy intonation, once again that love-light came into Lettice's eyes which had impressed Mrs. Donolly so forcibly the day before, and on which she had in a

great measure founded her defence of the young wife when Brian condemned her.

‘And were you happy at school? was the mistress kind? was she a good woman?’

‘She was not,’ cried Lettice with indignant emphasis. ‘It was she that was cross and tiresome—they always are, are not they? But she was fashionable; it was a fashionable school. We had a master for dancing and deportment: we learned how to curtsey and to come into a room, and to go out of a room, no less. And we had a French master, who talked French to us; and a very fine man he was, with beautiful eyes, and it was the delightful compliments he paid us. Some of us got more compliments than our share, I *am* afraid,’ and here she laughed, and blushed, and looked conscious and so pretty, as Lettice always did look when laughing and blushing, that Mary Donolly did not in the least wonder if she got more compliments than her school companions were likely to consider her fair share.

‘It makes one a little fastidious, I know,’ continued Lettice almost apologetically. ‘English *is* rather tame, it must be confessed, after French; and a French compliment!—well, Mrs. Donolly, perhaps you don’t know what it is, and if so, I won’t say anything about it,’ added she good-naturedly.

‘Indeed I do not,’ answered Mary, laughing. ‘It is not much about compliments I know in any

language, and I never heard one in French addressed to anybody, least of all to myself.'

'You cannot judge, then,' replied Lettice with easy superiority; 'but it *is* nice, and it makes one a little difficult to please afterwards. *Cela va sans dire.*'

'I like the English language better than French, then,' said Mrs. Donolly stoutly.

'Ah, you do understand French?'

'I read it, and I like reading English much better.'

'It is easier, of course; you don't require a dictionary to read English.'

'It is not that I mean; I can read French without a dictionary.'

Lettice opened her eyes at this. She might not require a dictionary to comprehend French compliments, but she certainly did for books written in that language.

'I have read some of Shakespeare's plays and some of Racine's,' continued Mary, 'and each is considered the finest dramatist in his language, and sure there can be no comparison between them at all.'

'I have not read Racine,' said Lettice shortly; 'I have read *Belisaire* and *Telemache*, but I had not got into Racine before I left school, and of course I have not read any French since. But you must have been to a very good school, Mrs. Donolly; and have you really been through Racine? and through Shakespeare at school too? We did not do Shake-

speare at my school. Mine was a *very* gen-teel school ; was yours ?'

'I never was at school at all,' replied Mrs. Donolly, laughing. 'My father had a large farm, and I was always at home till I married. My mother taught me what she knew, and I learned some things from the schoolmaster in the village ; but my French and my drawing came from a cousin who was governess in the Squire's, Mr. Bruce's family. They liked her very much at the house, and they had a great respect for my father and mother ; and I used to go up and take my lessons sometimes with the young ladies, but oftener when their lesson hours were over, my cousin Susan used to teach *me*.'

Lettrice looked at her new friend with a good deal of respect, though at the bottom of her heart she thought it was more genteel to have been at school than even to have a cousin who was governess in a squire's family, and to have occasionally taken lessons with the young ladies. 'I used to think I should like to be a governess and see high society,' said she ; 'and my father said if I did not marry, it might be the best thing for me ; but my aunt used to declare I was too'—

Here she caught herself up, and stopped short with a little burst of laughter, and her face the colour of a new-blown rose.

Mrs. Donolly laughed too. 'I think I can fancy

what your aunt said you were too—for a governess,' she said archly with a pleasant smile. 'Did she say it in French? Was the word *jolie*?'

Mrs. Tippington rose to take leave in great good humour.

'I really must be going,' she said; 'I have got to take a walk before dinner, and Frank said he would meet me, and I'll certainly look in at the Dorcas meeting on Thursday if I possibly can,' and as she repeated the words she felt quite pleased with her own patronizing manner.

'And we shall be very glad to see you if you can,' replied Mary Donolly simply, and without an atom of patronage in her way of saying it.

Lettrice then kissed the little girl, who said, 'Pretty face,' and stroked her blooming young cheek with two fat fingers, and taking a friendly if affected leave of Mrs. Donolly, set off for her walk. Mary stood for some minutes at the window watching her retreating figure as it disappeared from her sight.

'Poor pretty young thing,' said she as it did so, 'will she be happy? will she be good? what will become of her?' Then she caught her child up in her arms, and covering her soft little face with kisses, 'You shall never go to a gen-teel school, my darling,' she cried almost passionately.

'No, mammy, me 'ont,' was the wise response.



CHAPTER V.

FISHING.

LETTICE was pleased to find herself in the pretty country near Clanmena on one of the first sweet days of spring—one of those days that verily and indeed make a paradise of this earth of ours.

Every year is alike. Spring is never tired of repeating the same lovely tints, the same innocent beauties, and human hearts and eyes are never tired of delighting in them. It is always only a wondrously delicate blue wherewith she paints the sky; and it is always only green in its sweetest, tenderest shade she lays on the opening leaves. It is for ever and for ever the same; and yet it always seems as if a new and enchanting miracle had been wrought on nature at that especial time and for our especial benefit—on nature, who was herself before we were

born, and who will be herself after we are laid beneath her pretty grasses, and yet whom we never can regard except as something created only for us.

Lettice's spirits rose, as the spirits of every creature worthy to have spirits at all ought to rise, when, finding herself alone in the fir wood, she raised her young eyes to the heavens over her head, and then let them rest on the charming sight of trees, and flowers, and mosses around her.

'How beautiful it is,' she said softly; 'I wish Frank was here!'

So she passed on through the wood, but instead of entering the Castle grounds and taking the round that probably would have led to the fulfilment of her wish, as it was the road on which her husband had promised to meet her, if he could, she was tempted to wander for a few minutes along a narrow footpath which led her by the bank of an exceedingly pretty river. On the other side of the water a little mound covered with the first delicious spring primroses caught her delighted eye, and an irresistible impulse seized her to cross the stream and gather the flowers, and so make her room at home beautiful.

She looked eagerly about to discover some way of doing this safely, and through the branches of the trees that almost hid the dancing, sparkling water from her sight, she thought she discovered some

stepping-stones ; so without another thought, she plunged down among the bushes, and had taken two or three steps from stone to stone before she discovered that the treacherous way would only lead her to the middle of the stream, and leave her there unable to proceed farther.

But this was not the only discovery that she made. Her rapid movements had disturbed a young man who was standing in the river fishing, and by causing him to turn suddenly round, upset his basket.

‘Hullo,’ cried he, ‘what is this?’ and then with an impulse that often makes the person who is hurt crave forgiveness from the person who has hurt him, he added, ‘I beg your pardon!’

‘It’s yours that I’m begging, then,’ replied Lettice, smiling, blushing, and looking regretfully at his upset basket of fish.

The gentleman, for he evidently was a gentleman, now took off his hat and made her an extremely polite bow.

‘Can I do anything for you?’ he said. ‘You can hardly cross the river here, I am afraid. Is it your way home? or were you coming for anything?’

He held out his hand as he spoke, to assist her to retrace her steps to the shore, for her position as she stood there balancing herself on a not very firmly placed stone was rather precarious.

'You had better return,' he said. 'Do let me help you.'

Lettice accepted his assistance thankfully.

'Indeed, then, it's not my way home,' she answered. 'And it is only that I was wishing to gather those primroses, the first I have seen. And I thought I could cross here; but it's impossible, and sure it doesn't really signify.'

She looked with blue regretful eyes at the primroses as she spoke.

Without saying a word, the fisherman pulled his trousers up to his knees, stepped lightly over the stones Lettice had just left, waded a bit in the water, and so made a flying leap on to the opposite bank.

Once there, he shook himself like a Newfoundland dog, took off his hat, filled it with handful after handful of the pale scented blossoms, and returning to our astonished heroine in much the same manner as he had left her, laid the hat with its lovely burthen at her feet.

'Oh, thank you,' cried she almost incoherently in her surprise and pleasure. 'Oh, how could you? Oh, how pretty they are! How I can ever thank you enough, I don't know.'

He laughed, and picking up his rod, began lazily whipping the water.

'I'm only too happy to have been here,' he said civilly. 'You are staying at the Castle, I presume?'

This question, showing that he thought her not only a lady, but a lady capable of staying at the Castle, delighted Lettice more than anything that had yet happened, pleased as she was with the whole adventure.

'I am not,' she replied, but very much as if she might have been.

'Oh,' he said with a strangely disappointed air and manner; then he paused a moment, and added, 'Mr. Hope returns to-morrow, does not he?'

Lettice felt extremely glad that she had seen Mr. Hope drive through the town from the station on his way home the day before, as it enabled her to reply with easy nonchalance:

'No, indeed; it was yesterday he came back.'

The fisherman turned eyes of blank amazement on her, and gave a little low whistle.

'You don't say so?' he exclaimed, and added almost under his breath, 'What an awful sell!'

'And the Miss Hopes did not leave the Castle at all,' continued Lettice with the air of one who knew about the family, 'and their papa returned to them yesterday.'

He had recovered himself by this time, and said very carelessly:

'I suppose they are going to the ball on Thursday. Are you going?'

'Indeed, then, I don't know,' said she, though she knew perfectly well that she was not.

'If you *are* there,' said the fisherman with a perfectly polite *empressement*, 'please let me be introduced to you, and keep a dance or two for me, will you?'

Lettice was excessively amused to find herself not only taken for a lady, but for an unmarried lady, and she demurely promised that she would see what she could do.

It now occurred to her for the first time that she had better terminate this entertaining adventure, as her husband might have come to meet her on the other road, and be surprised at her not making her appearance, whilst the reason of her delay might not seem to him so pleasant as it did to her. She was quite longing, also, to tell him of all that had happened; for, vain and silly as she was in many respects, she loved Frank a great deal too well not to find that her principal pleasure in having been taken for a lady, and engaged beforehand for some dances at a ball, lay in describing her triumphs to him.

But just as she was about to bow to this polite stranger and to leave him, something so new and strange happened that she felt herself obliged to stop and see what would come of it.

There was a rustling among the branches of the trees in the tangled grove that lay between the river and the Castle grounds, a rustling and a movement, and then a sweet girl voice sang loud and

shrill the following words, approaching nearer and nearer them as it did so :

‘ Have you seen my fisherman
 With his shining fishes O ?
 Pray, find him if you can,
 He will grant my wishes O !
 He will get a pretty boat
 Ready in a minute O !
 He will make the creature float,
 And will put me in it O !
 Pray, find my fisherman
 With his shining fishes O !
 He will grant, if he can,
 All my little wishes O ! ’

The last words died away into a joyous laugh, and a girl stepped eagerly out of the wood, saying, ‘ Here I am ! ’

Lettice instantly recognised the prettiest of the Miss Hopes, whom she was in the habit of admiring so much in church, and the putting on of whose sash she had, all in vain, endeavoured to imitate. Her quick eyes even now took in every particular of the young lady’s dress, but the simplicity of the holland skirt and jacket quite astonished and almost scandalized her,—a simplicity which was, however, partly atoned for in her eyes by the smart little brigand hat with its cock’s feather which covered the beautiful hair. Miss Hope appeared to be utterly confounded when she discovered the couple standing together by the river.

Whether the words 'Here I am' were addressed to the birds or the beetles, Lettice could not say, but they certainly did not appear to have been intended for either herself or the fisherman; for Miss Hope, with a sudden exclamation of 'oh,' dropped her little spotted veil over her pretty face, and strolled on along the bank of the river.

'That is Miss Diana Hope, one of the young ladies we were talking about,' said Lettice in a low voice as soon as she had left them.

'Is it, indeed?' replied the fisherman rather drily.

'*Is* she not pretty?' cried Lettice with innocent earnestness.

'Pretty?' answered the fisherman, very much as if the idea was presented to his mind for the first time. 'Well, yes, I suppose she is pretty.'

'I think her quite beautiful,' continued Lettice.

Then the fisherman suddenly sang out rather loudly, but in a sweet flexible tenor voice, what Lettice supposed was a morsel of some old ditty:

'Linger yet, linger yet,
Pretty painted butterfly!
Why forget-me-nots forget,
Blue as a summer sky?
Waiting, waiting, only waiting,
Pretty butterfly, for you;
Is it wise to despise
Forget-me-nots so blue?

Very Genteel.

‘ Fly away, fly away,
 Only to fly back again,
 Blue as we are to-day
 To-morrow we remain ;
 Waiting, waiting, ever waiting,
 Faithful, innocent, and true,
 Is it wise to despise
 Forget-me-nots so blue ? ’

Miss Diana Hope, who had not yet disappeared from sight, stood still with her back to the performer, but pausing, naturally enough, to listen to his song ; and Lettice, as the last words rang forth with the sweetness of a pathetic reproach, quite forgot that she had intended to go away.

After a moment, however, she remembered herself, and, as a matter of course, remembered also what a long time she must have kept her husband waiting ; so she said very pleasantly, if rather hastily, ‘ And I have heard two beautiful songs, and I am taking away with me as many primroses as I can carry, and now I must be going home. Good morning, and thank you.’

‘ Good morning,’ said the fisherman, raising his hat from his head as politely as he had saluted her at first.

‘ Evidently not having discovered that I am not a lady,’ thought foolish, flattered Lettice to herself ; and so she retraced her steps, hearing him sing out with redoubled pathos as she did so :

‘ Is it wise to despise
 Forget-me-nots so blue ? ’

‘What an enchanting afternoon I *have* had!’ thought Lettice as she hurried on. ‘How amused Frank *will* be to hear about it all! But, oh dear, why is there nothing better to return to?—the street and the shop, the shop and the street—and isn’t it a pity? Oh, why can’t one change some things?—just some little tiny things that if one could change, life would be only pleasure.’

It never occurred to Lettice, that perhaps it was not intended that her life or any life *should* be only pleasure; nor did she ask herself what her chances of heaven would be if it were. She ran more than walked by the way that she had told Frank to come and meet her, looking eagerly about for him and longing to see him; but to her surprise and disappointment, no Frank appeared.

‘I suppose he got tired and did not choose to wait,’ she thought. ‘He would have waited three months ago; he thought nothing too much trouble for me then. I wish people did not change. I wish lovers could always continue lovers. Lovers are so much nicer than husbands, or, indeed, than anything else.’

However, Lettice had to return home by herself, forcibly reminded by the solitude of every step that Frank Tippington was her husband and not her lover.

She was greatly astonished when, regretfully

leaving the green woods behind her, she entered Clanmena to hear the church clock strike half-past four, and thus to discover that she was thirty minutes too late for dinner.

It really is no slight offence for a tradesman's wife to make dinner wait. It is sure to be a great inconvenience to her husband not to be able to keep regular hours; besides which, his wife ought to be at hand while dinner is being served, to be certain that everything is done rightly, and that nothing is wanted.

Lettice's conscience gave her an uncomfortable little prick or two, and she felt a disagreeable certainty that Frank's mother had not only never kept dinner waiting, at least in her son's experience, but had always visited the kitchen for a few minutes before it came up to put finishing touches with her own useful hands and make sure that all was as it should be.

'I wish his mother was quite different from what she is,' thought the young wife as she hurried through the streets. 'If she was only like my aunt, now, it would be much more fair; and in that case, Frank would probably not have kept a shop at all! She would have had ambition for him, and put him into some higher grade, and I should have been a lady, instead of a tradesman's wife—a real lady such as that gentlemanly fisherman took me for

Then I should not have had to marry a shop, and the only trial of my life would not have been. Ah! if only Frank's mother had been like my aunt!' with which wish on her lips, Lettice entered her own home in High Street, and met her husband on its threshold with his watch in his hand.





CHAPTER VI.

LATE FOR DINNER.

RRANK TIPPINGTON looked exceedingly annoyed when Lettice tripped up to him. He stood quite silent for a moment, regarding her almost as if he did not know who she was.

‘Where have you been all the afternoon?’ he then said sternly.

‘Why did not you come to meet me?’ retorted his wife.

‘Why did not I? I did! Did I ever fail you when I promised you anything, Lettice? It’s why did not *you* come to meet *me* is the question; and why did not you, Lettice?’

‘And I did,’ she pouted, ‘only I was detained.’

‘And it was not at Mrs. Donolly’s you were detained, then; for after I had tired out with waiting

for you in the Castle grounds till I felt you could not be coming to me at all, or you'd have come long ago, I hurried to the Square and I learned from Mrs. Donolly that you had left hours before. So I hurried home again, hoping I might find you ; and it was just going out I was to look for you, though 'deed I did not know where to go or what to do. It is too bad of you, Lettice ; you have frightened me to death. It is quite too bad. And then, in you come just for all the world as if nothing had happened.'

'Well, Frank, it's yourself that can make a fuss about a trifle. And what is it I've done, if you please? It's just half an hour late for dinner I am ! I'm sorry enough if that's all, but I could not help it ; I was detained.'

'And what was it detained you ?'

Lettice had been longing to tell her husband all that had happened, and to amuse him with the narration of her adventures, which, she thought, would be almost as agreeable in the recapitulation as in the occurrence ; but now it suddenly occurred to her, just as she was going to begin quite eagerly, that in his present mood he might not take to it kindly, and might consider her interview with a strange gentleman in a river as a poor excuse for not meeting her husband according to their engagement, and for keeping his dinner waiting ; so she

suddenly relapsed into her affected manner, and said very superciliously :

‘Sure there would be no difficulty about anything if we dined at a more genteel hour. But four o’clock!’ and she closed her eyes as if the very idea was almost more than she could bear, and she was seriously thinking of fainting away about it.

‘I shan’t get my dinner at four o’clock to-day,’ cried Frank, more roughly than he had ever before spoken to his pretty Lettice, ‘nor at five either if you stand chattering there. Will you take your things off and come down to dinner at all this evening, I wonder? I shall be late for an appointment as it is, and the bit of mutton will be burnt to cinders.’

Lettice ran up-stairs in silence. She felt vexed both with herself and with her husband, and she was also beginning to discover that she was extremely hungry—a fact that she had not been aware of while the amusement and excitement of her walk had lasted.

She threw off her hat and scarf without caring what became of them, and took her seat at the dinner-table very soon after Kitty had put on it a black, greasy, and otherwise distasteful-looking neck of mutton.

‘It’s too bad; it is, really, Lettice,’ Mr. Tippington said as he turned the joint about and cut from it the best pieces he could find for her. ‘I never had

such uncomfortable dinners in all my life before as I've had since I was married.'

'I'm thinking the Clanmena meat is not good.'

'And it's Clanmena that is famous for its mutton ; and it is not that only—it is everything, it is not just the dinners. Here's my shirts, now, sure I have not got one that's fit to put on. I wanted a clean one to-day, for I have to take up some books and some stationery to the Castle after dinner, and I shall be late for that ; and Mr. Hope is a gentleman who doesn't understand being kept waiting,—and why should he ?—and he will maybe deal with Mulholland instead of me, just in consequence of this. But as I was saying, there's not a shirt I could find fit to put on me : the buttons are off them everywhere, or it's only by single threads they're held on, and coming off between my fingers, which is the most aggravating of all.'

'You *tear* your buttons off more than any man I ever heard of,' said Lettice plaintively.

'I do not ; and if I did, it's all the more reason why you should sew them on, which you don't.'

'I *did* sew some on last week, and pricked my finger, and ran the needle behind my nail with a jerk !'

'And then there are my socks. I don't suppose that there's another man in Clanmena who has his socks in such a state—real good socks as they are,

which my mother knit for me, knitted them herself, and not a heel or a toe on one of them. I haven't a pair to put on.'

Lettice made no reply to this, and her husband continued in a tone of great ill-usage :

'It is too bad of you entirely, Lettice.'

Then she answered with tears in her voice :

'I can't do everything. I do work for you ; I am embroidering you a pair of slippers.'

'Sure I don't want embroidered slippers ; I want shirts and socks.'

'That's a brutal thing to say,' cried Lettice, and melted into tears.

Mr. Tippington rose from the table, leaving his unfinished dinner on his plate.

'Don't cry about it, anyway,' he said almost penitently ; 'but it's enough to vex any man, you know it is.'

'I don't,' sobbed Lettice, seeing her advantage and unconsciously using it ; 'it's me that's wrong in everything ; and you don't care for the *beautiful* slippers I am working my fingers out making for you, and I thought you liked them !'

'So I do ; you know I do. Don't cry, Lettice,' and he came up to her and tried to take her hands down from her face.

But Lettice held them there tightly, and sobbed persistently through them.

'You *said* you only cared for shirts and socks,' she cried.

'I did not mean that, then. Sure I never said that, did I?'

'You did, and it was brutal; I can't bear it,' and a great sob accompanied the word brutal.

'I suppose it was rather brutal,' said he slowly and penitently. 'Let's say no more about it at all. Give me a kiss, Lettice; but *do* sew on my buttons, there's a dear, and give me socks with toes and heels to them, for it really is so very uncomfortable.'

'Of course I will,' replied Lettice, 'and I do, often and often; it's only an accident. And oh, Frank, I wish you had not been so unkind to-day, when I *have* so much to tell you.'

'And I have not a moment to listen. It's late I am, and I must be off. It all goes wrong when a working man can't get his meals regularly.'

'You are not a working man!'

'I am a tradesman, then, which is much the same thing.'

'It is not. Sure you needn't be making it out worse than it is. It's bad enough in all conscience, but it is not *that*. Oh my, how I do wish we were anything else—anything at all!'

'But that is so silly, Lettice, when I can't be anything else, and don't wish to be anything else. It's

yourself knew what I was when you married me ; and did not Donolly explain it nicely, and show you all the advantages so clearly yesterday ? 'Deed he did, Lettice.'

'I thought you were already late for an appointment at the Castle,' was Lettice's sole reply.

'I am, and I must go. Now look here, Lettice,—it's your own fault entirely,—I was obliged to let Pat go out,—but he was at home when I ought to have been at the Castle, so 'it's your own fault and no other's,—and there's nobody but you to look after the shop ; and you must just take your work or one of the books maybe, and sit behind the table where my desk is, and then if any one happens to come in, it's you that must attend to them.'

Lettice gave a slight scream and looked almost annihilated.

'I can't,' she cried ; 'it's impossible ! I could *not* ; and it's you that shouldn't propose such a thing to me, Frank. I can't do it, and I won't.'

'You must,' said he ; 'it's your own fault, and it must be done. I am sorry, but I can't help it. Come, Lettice, no nonsense. Get up, if you please, and do what I tell you directly,' and he looked so much in earnest and spoke so sternly, that Lettice, who had scarcely since their marriage known her husband exert his authority, felt almost frightened, and slowly and reluctantly obeyed him.

She glanced furtively at him as she did so, to see if she might venture to rebel; but as he was actually frowning, and there was not the least symptom of relenting in his whole face, she made up her mind in a disconsolate manner that she had better not.

‘It’s hard, that’s what it is,’ she murmured; ‘I never expected it.’ But that was all the protest that she dared to make as she followed him into the shop.

Frank put a chair at the table he had spoken of, and said, ‘You can read or you can write, Lettice, just as you like, and maybe there will be no customers at all. But if one or another comes in, sure you know where everything is, for all the world, as well as I do, and the price is marked in plain figures and no mistake about it. I will be back in an hour, I hope. I will hurry back because you are doing what you don’t like.’

His voice and manner softened considerably before he had finished his speech, and he kissed her affectionately as he went away.

Lettice shed a few tears when she found herself alone, partly from vexation and partly from a sort of flurry of spirits that she hardly comprehended herself. She had been almost frightened by her husband’s severe manner; for, though they had had quarrels since their marriage, some of which have

been narrated in these pages, they had been quarrels in which each had borne their part as, at least, equals, even if Lettice had not assumed, and been permitted by Frank to assume, a position of superiority. Now the tables were turned, and while she had a certain sense of ill-usage, at the same time she had never before felt how strongly, in spite of everything, she loved her husband.

‘And he would not even let me tell him my adventures; and I know he will be pleased at my being taken for a lady—a lady staying at the Castle,’ thought she. ‘Oh, if I was only a real lady! Oh, if only he did not keep a shop!’

As these thoughts passed through her mind, she stretched her hand listlessly out and pulled a little volume down from the shelf near her, taking it idly as the first book she could reach without the trouble of moving, and attracted also by its pretty binding.

She opened it and found that on each page was a text or two from the Bible, followed by a few verses. Her eyes fell on this: ‘For I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content’ (Phil. iv. 11); ‘Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee’ (Heb. xiii. 5), which she read with a little shock of surprise, as it seemed to have come

there like an answer and reproof to her thoughts.
And after that she read these verses :

‘Be contented with your place
On this earth that we inherit ;
Poverty is no disgrace,
Nor are riches any merit.
Tread the path that is your own,
With a modest self-respect,
Nor for things that are unknown,
Duties tangible neglect.

‘Some one may have something got
You are wanting, but be certain
You have something he has not :
There are two sides to the curtain.
God has given what is fit,
’Twixt the cradle and the grave ;
You must make the best of it,
Knowing it is God who gave.’

‘What queer verses ! what odd ideas !’ soliloquized Lettice ; ‘but it’s not true, you know, because then we should never rise, and everybody ought to rise if they can. In fact, nobody ought to be contented with his position in life. If a captain was, where would be the use of generals ? and no poor man would ever grow rich. Sure why should I be contented with a little shop when I want a villa and grounds to it, and a trap, and ever so many other nice things besides, which I will never have unless Frank gets on to be better off than he is now ?—why should I ?’

‘Will you show me some notepaper, please?’ said a gay kind voice, interrupting her meditations, and for the first time in her life Lettice found herself obliged to stand up behind a counter and serve in a shop.

She raised her eyes to see who was addressing her as she glided forward, and discovered that her first customer was Miss Diana Hope.





CHAPTER VII.

DIANA HOPE.

MISS DIANA HOPE looked just as pretty as when earlier in the day she had walked down to the river, singing gentle cadences about her fisherman, and attired in the same holland dress and brigand hat as she had then worn.

Evidently Miss Diana Hope had not dined, nor had the time come for her even to think of dressing for dinner, and Lettice regretted more than ever her own ungenteel hour for that meal.

She looked with pleased admiring eyes at the young lady, whom she really thought appeared to regard her with the same, and then turning rather shyly away, she opened a drawer and took out of it some packets of notepaper. Frank had only said what was a fact, when he declared that she knew where all the articles for sale were as well as he did.

When first he had brought her home, the novelty of the thing had amused her, and she had hunted up and down through every shelf in the shop, and made herself mistress of all its arrangements.

'I never saw you here before,' said Miss Hope pleasantly.

Lettice looked at her with a bright smile and shook her head.

'You never did,' she said, 'but sure I will be most happy to serve you.' She spoke rather hesitatingly, and laid some of the packets of notepaper before her first customer as she did so. 'Will any of these suit you?'

'It must be small—and quite a common simple sort—no—none of these devices, please—something like everything else—something that could not be traced, you know.'

The word traced seemed to escape her almost accidentally, and she stopped short, gave a little laugh, and looked sharply at Lettice.

'Are you Mr. Tippington's sister?' she asked. 'I left him in papa's study with a parcel of books, and ran off here in ever so great a hurry, expecting to find only the shop-boy,' and she gave another rather odd little laugh.

'It's out on an errand Pat is,' replied Lettice; 'and I am not Mr. Tippington's sister—I am his wife.'

‘His wife!’ cried Miss Hope, astonished. ‘Why, you are such a young thing; you look younger than I am,—not that I am not quite old enough to be a wife too,’ she added, laughing. ‘But surely and surely I have seen you somewhere before, have I not? I can’t think where, but I feel convinced I have seen you somewhere before, and not so very long ago either.’

‘I saw you this afternoon by the river-side. You came through the wood singing.’

‘Why, *you* were the young lady with—and he told me you—oh, dear me—wonders will never cease!’

‘He told you? You know him, then?’ cried Lettice, surprised into asking the question.

Miss Hope looked at her with a droll, odd expression, covered her face with both her hands as if she was at play, and then laughed heartily.

‘Don’t tell—don’t tell!’ she cried as soon as the laughter allowed her to speak, and after that she sang out quite loudly, standing there in the shop, loudly and sweetly too:

‘Have you seen my fisherman
With his shining fishes O?
Pray, find him if you can,
He will grant my wishes O!’

‘That was a very pretty song,’ said Lettice, ‘and it had a pleasant sound of its own as you came through the bushes; but it’s the other that I liked better.’

'The other? What other?'

'The one that he sang about forget-me-nots.'

'Good girl to like that better! It's charming; it is one of my awfully pet favourites,' and again she sang quite loudly, but with a great deal of pathetic expression :

'Is it wise to despise
Forget-me-nots so blue?'

While the words were still rising, with their beautiful melody, from her lips, and Lettice was listening in pleased amusement, another young lady entered the shop, and Lettice at once recognised her as the eldest Miss Hope, whom, with her sister, she had so often beheld and admired at a distance in church.

The new-comer did not appear to be at all pleased at seeing her sister here, or it might be more correct to say, at hearing her.

'Hush, hush, Diana; pray do not!' she cried reprovingly. 'What *will* you be at next? Pray do not sing out in shops in this way. Why, any one might hear you!'

'No one can hear me,' replied Diana coolly, 'except Mrs. Tippington, and I was singing on purpose that she might hear me; and singing was made to be heard; and I'm not one bit ashamed of my voice, and I don't see why I should be when

Garcia said it would do, and I don't mind if all the world heard me. Voices were made to be heard.'

'Don't be silly. Voices are not made to be heard in shops, and'—

'Dear me, are they not? How is a body to buy anything, then? Now I was *going* to ask the price of this notepaper, but of course I can't if voices were not made, *et cetera, et cetera.*'

'I think, Miss Hope, this is the kind that shall suit. It is quite plain,' said Lettice, opening some as she spoke that answered to the description of paper that could not be *traced*.

'Oh, no!' cried Diana, 'I will not take *that* on any account,' and she spurned it with her fingers; 'it is not the kind I *ever* use. This with the coloured edges, and the smart devices on the envelopes, are much more in my line. A packet of each, if you please,' and as she said this, she pushed them across to Lettice, and gave her a look so full of meaning and significance as she did so that our heroine felt quite startled.

Then Miss Diana Hope sat down on one of the chairs in the shop, crossed her legs, put her hands on her knees, and hummed audibly :

'Is it wise to despise
Forget-me-nots so blue?'

'*Are* you coming home, Diana?' asked Miss Hope severely.

'No, thank you, dear. Not if I knows it,' replied the other meekly.

'Very well, I can't stay, then. I suppose you will come back in time for dinner. If you do not, papa will not be at all pleased,' and with an air of great dissatisfaction Miss Hope walked out of the shop.

Then Miss Diana Hope took her hands off her knees, uncrossed her legs, jumped up, executed a dancing step or two on the floor, laughed a little, and sang out very loudly indeed :

' Is it wise to despise
Forget-me-nots so blue? '

Lettice could not help laughing also.

'Why don't you come and do it? You look like longing to dance, too. We could take a waltz round and round; there's room and to spare. I do think you are an uncommonly nice girl,' said this irrepressible young lady.

'I used to be very fond of dancing,' was all Lettice replied, and it was spoken rather regretfully.

'I say,' said Miss Diana, 'you must put me up a packet of that plain notepaper and a packet of common envelopes along with the others; and you must not tell anybody—no, not a living creature—that you sold them to me.'

'Deed I will not,' replied Lettice, 'but I can't think why.'

'No, I daresay you can't think why. Would not

you like to know? and would not I like to tell you? Yes, I should rather, only I don't dare.'

'Maybe it's the name of the gentleman who was fishing by the river this morning that you're going to tell me,' said Lettice archly.

'I tell you his name!' almost screamed Miss Diana. 'Why, how am I to know his name? How am I to know the names of all the fellows who go about fishing in our river? Why, you know more of him than I do, I should suppose. It was not for me that he waded across the river and filled his hat with primroses, was it?'

'And how should you know it was me he did it for, unless it was himself that told you?' asked Lettice quietly.

'You have me there! you have me there!' cried Miss Diana, and she appeared extremely pleased at having been caught. 'How did I know? The pity of it is that I can't tell you how I know, but for all that I *do* know. Did not he sing nicely, hey?' she added abruptly.

'It's a beautiful voice he has of his own, and I'd like to hear him use it again dearly.'

'Would you like to hear us sing a duet together?' asked Diana demurely.

'Then it's yourself that does know him,' cried Lettice.

'Because you would like to hear us sing a duet

together, does that prove that I know him? The conclusion is not logical for a bookseller's wife. I assure you, my dear madam, that it is not.'

Lettice laughed gaily, but did not at the moment find any reply to make.

'Do you sing at all, Mrs. Tippington?' asked Diana, as if struck by a sudden thought.

'I do, but it's only a little.'

'Will you sing in the glees we are getting up for a school feast next week? Will you come up to the Castle and practise with me? We want another voice.' She spoke with extraordinary eagerness. 'Will you? will you?'

'Will I? and will I not be glad to do it if I can?' replied Lettice, colouring with pleasure. 'There is nothing I'll like better.'

'We are to have it in the Presbyterian schoolhouse. Mr. Dennis kindly lends it to us for the occasion; and he and his wife, and Mr. Lawson and his wife (he's the clergyman, you know), all help one way or another, and we are getting up glees. Agatha—that's my severe sister who was here just now—won't be at home, which is the greatest of blessings; so I and little Doe will have to manage it all, and we want a voice in Agatha's place. When will you come up and see about it?'

'Sure I will be pleased to come whenever it suits you.'

‘That’s right. What a nice girl you are! I say, don’t you think I’m an uncommonly nice girl too?’

‘I do, then,’ replied Lettice, colouring and laughing, but speaking with unmistakeable emphasis. ‘There’s never one of all I ever knew half as nice.’

‘Hurrah!’ cried Miss Diana; ‘it’s awfully jolly of you to say that. And I don’t think you said it just because I asked you to; you *look* as if you really meant it.’

‘And it’s myself that does mean it, then.’

‘All right, very well. Will you come to the Castle at twelve o’clock to-morrow? And ask for Miss Diana (that’s me), and they’ll show you up into the school-room, and we’ll try the glees. I shall settle all about it, and I am as glad as ever I can be.’

Lettice felt quite giddy with pleasure and vanity. Here was something happening to her, just the kind of thing she would have most desired if she could ever have ventured to desire such an impossibility—the fulfilment of her wildest and most romantic visions, the erection on earth of a *chateau d’espagne*, and all going far beyond any visions that had visited her or any airy chateau she had ever framed;—one of the Miss Hopes making her acquaintance, taking a fancy to her, talking to her as if she was an equal, and finally inviting her to go up to the Castle and sing glees!

What would Frank say to this? Why, this was infinitely better than if forty fishing gentlemen had taken her for a lady; and this had come from serving in a shop. Well, a shop was not such a bad thing after all. Oh, how earnestly she hoped that Frank would be in a nice humour when he came home, so that she should be able to tell him everything, and he would care to listen to all she was so eager to tell him.

While these thoughts were still careering through Lettice's startled and excited mind, and Diana Hope was nodding to her a gay and friendly good-bye, her husband himself walked into the shop.

He looked a little surprised at the intimate attitude of the two girls, and hardly as if he knew whether to advance or retire.

'It is Miss Diana Hope, Frank,' Lettice said a little breathlessly.

'Well, Mr. Tippington, you've done with papa, have you?' cried the young lady; 'and I hope you made him take some jolly rubbish, and not only solemn books, sermons, and tracts, and goody trash, you know. Don't inundate the poor old Castle with such stuff, please don't.'

Frank Tippington did not feel very much delighted with this address, and replied to it gravely and respectfully that they happened to *be* only sermons and tracts that Mr. Hope had been looking at that

afternoon. Very likely he would give an order for lighter books on another occasion, as he had done so before.

Miss Diana made a long face, and said in a ludicrously lachrymose voice, 'Oh, poor me!' Then she nodded and smiled again at Lettice, saying, 'Don't forget,' and with a graceful little bend of her pretty head to Frank, left the shop.

'So that is Miss Diana Hope, is it?' said Frank. 'It is only lately that she has come home from school, and it is uncommonly pretty she is; but for all her beauty, I do not like the way in which she talked about sermons and tracts, I do not. And why should a girl fancy she is clever for despising religion, or for talking as if she did, when maybe in her heart she does not?'

'Sure, she did not mean anything,' cried Lettice; 'that was only fun. And she is as nice as ever she can be; and she wishes me to sing in the glees at the school feast next week, and I am to go up to the Castle to-morrow morning to try them over.'

Frank looked pleased in spite of himself.

'Sure, Lettice, that *is* pleasant,' said he.

Then Lettice, encouraged by this, poured out to him all the histories of the day, comprising as they did her adventures by the river and her subsequent interview with Miss Diana Hope; but she was, almost unconsciously, careful to soften anything in

that young lady's conduct or words on both occasions of which she thought it possible that her husband might not approve.

It was not in human nature for any young husband not to be both amused and gratified by his wife's success, and he pleased Lettice very much, who had been a little doubtful as to how he would take it all, by expressing both of these feelings.

'Only you must be very careful when you get among real gentlefolks not to be either too free or too shy; it's either of them is bad taste,' he said rather sententiously. 'And, Lettice dear, it's too young and too pretty you are to talk to gentlemen out of doors, and it's better pleased I'd have been if he had not gathered the primroses, and you should have come away just as soon as you could.'

'It was nice of him taking me for a lady,' said Lettice with a pretty little coquettish laugh.

'*Be* a lady in yourself,' replied her husband, 'and it's not much it matters what you are taken for.'



CHAPTER VIII.

A LETTER.

LETTICE spent that evening dutifully sewing buttons on to her husband's shirts and darning his socks. She sighed and yawned, and yawned and sighed over a work that was very distasteful to her; and in her own mind she wished over and over again that they kept a second servant, who would do the mending of the clothes that the mistress had to attend to now.

'I will certainly have one at the villa,' she thought.

The villa had gradually become an actual future possession of Lettice's, which is not an uncommon result of constantly thinking of, wishing for, and planning about something that is not ours.

'There shall be a cook, a housemaid who can sew, and a page in buttons. Oh, the happiness of having a page in buttons of my own!'

Though the darning depressed Lettice a good deal, and the present moment was therefore rather distasteful to her, the past and the future gave her so much pleasure that they supported her and enabled her to endure the present with cheerfulness. Her thoughts while her needle went in and out through Frank's socks, knitted by kind maternal hands, were for ever going back to the amusing scene by the river, and the charming conversation in the shop, or forward to the still greater enjoyment that she expected next day at the Castle.

'Is it a very handsome house, Frank dear?'

Mr. Tippington was obliged on that evening to leave his wife very much to her own reflections, because he had some rather intricate accounts connected with his business to go through and make up.

'What house is it?' asked he, looking up in rather a dazed manner from the paper covered by minute figures that lay before him.

'Sure, it's the Castle I'm talking of.'

'The Castle? Oh yes, where you are going to-morrow. It is, and it is not. It's well enough, you know, but it's not like the great places I've seen in England; it's they that are grand entirely. It's not in the same way it's kept; the grounds about the house are not so neat. But it's good and handsome for all that, and it's a big house with big rooms in it.'

‘It’s only the schoolroom I will be seeing, I suppose. It’s not likely that they’ll be showing me the rest of the house.’

‘It is not. Anyway, it’s not a show-house. You never saw such places as English gentlemen and noblemen live in. They *are* show-houses. The wonder is where they find a corner at all to sit down in to have a cup of tea or a chat with a friend, with their statues, and pictures, and marbles, and ornaments, and silks, and satins, and frescoed ceilings, and painted walls. It’s bewildered entirely I am when I think of them. And in England, they are not castles at all, as they are in Ireland; they are houses, if you please. Castles are places with buttresses and battlements, and narrow windows, and arched doors, and ivy, and portcullises, and moats, and all the rest of it,’ remarked Mr. Tippington with the air of a travelled man.

‘It’s only picnics we have in such places in Ireland, then,’ replied Lettice with dignity.

Her husband laughed.

‘Sure that is in the ruins of some of them; but it’s not in ruins that the English aristocracy live by any means.’

‘And it’s often and often I’m wondering, Frank dear, when we will be rich enough to have a villa of our own.’

‘A what?’ cried Frank, astonished and quite

roused out of the occupation he had resumed, of adding, subtracting, and dividing innumerable figures.

‘A villa, to be sure! A villa where we will live like gentlefolks, and you drive to your business every day in a trap of your own. It’s your business I shall call it, then, and never a word of a shop.’

‘Now, Lettice, my dear, don’t be a goose. I’m not ashamed of keeping a shop, and it’s a much richer man I must be before I can live anywhere but over it; and now let me go on with my work, if you please, for it’s plenty I have to do, and I must do it.’

After this rebuff, Lettice sighed and yawned, and yawned and sighed over her socks till bed time, and only kept up her spirits at all by thinking of the next day.

The next day came at last, though not a moment sooner for all Lettice’s wishing and longing.

She had a great deal of difficulty in selecting a gown to wear, and making her toilet altogether as genteel as she desired that it should be, and felt that it ought to be, for such a grand occasion. She could not find a single collar and pair of cuffs in any of her drawers that were clean enough and that were not tumbled, and she tumbled everything else that she possessed in her unsuccessful search; so she determined that she would buy herself a new set on

her way to the Castle, and also a pair of lemon-coloured kid gloves, which in her eyes was the very height of gentility ; and these, with her new black silk, and her hat trimmed with blue ribands and forget-me-nots, she hoped would make a really elegant toilet.

She did not like to ask her husband for money to pay for these little purchases, and she had none of her own ; so she determined to get them at the haberdasher's shop on credit, and pay for them when she could.

She dressed herself much sooner than was necessary, for she was in such a state of restless excitement that she could not keep still. After looking at least twenty times in the glass, and every time making some trifling change in the set of a flower or a riband, she went down-stairs into the sitting-room, and strolled about there, gazing idly out of the windows, and examining her watch at every turn.

She was rather annoyed when Kitty, opening the door, put in her shock head of untidy red hair to announce Mrs. Donolly, who followed immediately on her steps.

Lettice at once assumed her most 'genteel' and die-away manner.

'I hope it's not very rude you'll be thinking me,' she said, smiling sweetly and extending her hand at

the same time so as just to touch the tips of Mrs. Donolly's fingers, 'but I'm afraid it is only a very few minutes I can spare you. I have an appointment—at—the—Castle.'

The last three words were dropped out with little pauses between them, and closed eyes, and were so affectedly uttered that they were hardly intelligible.

'Don't mind me,' replied Mrs. Donolly, always cheerfully good-humoured. 'Of course you shall keep an appointment. I will call at any time. And where is it you are going?'

'To the Castle,' said Lettice, rather loudly this time, and swelling with importance.

'Oh, indeed,' replied Mrs. Donolly, decidedly puzzled, but too polite to show what she felt.

'Miss Diana Hope called yesterday and invited me,' continued Mrs. Tippington softly, closing her eyelids. 'We are to practise glees together. It's for the school feast, you know—next week I think she said; and, by the bye, Mrs. Donolly, do *you* happen to sing at the school feast too?'

'Indeed I do. I sing there,' replied the other, laughing good-humouredly, 'but I have never been up to the Castle to practise. There's a practice to-morrow evening at the schoolhouse, and the young ladies will be at it. But it's a great compliment they are paying you, Mrs. Tippington, asking you to sing

at the Castle. They have never done it by any one else among us ; they have not, indeed !'

Lettice was inexpressibly delighted.

'It's rather nice,' she said, closing her eyes with languid grace and modest non-self-assertion, then opening them again. 'And I am quite afraid that I must be wishing you good morning, Mrs. Donolly. I don't walk fast this warm weather, and I'm thinking that it's time I stroll up to the Castle. I am *so* sorry, but you know I am *always* happy to see you any time you can look in,' and with these patronizing words, and an air so patronizing that even good-tempered, sensible, far-sighted Mary Donolly felt her colour rising under it, Mrs. Tippington gently bade her adieu.

'I think Brian was right after all, and I do wonder what real ladies like the Miss Hopes can see in her. Now, I call that sort of thing *vulgar*,' was that lady's first thought as she went away, but her second at once corrected any undue severity that there might have been in it. 'She is very young and attractive and pretty, and the sort of girl any one might take a fancy to. I do hope her intercourse at the Castle will improve her and do her good. I can't help feeling a great deal of interest in the young creature for herself, and because she is the wife of my Brian's oldest and dearest friend, and I am really *anxious* about her.'

'How she envies me!' thought Lettice as she tripped into the haberdasher's shop, and after spending three shillings and sixpence on a delicate little pair (Lettice's number was six and a quarter) of lemon-coloured kid gloves that made her feel genteel only to look at, asked to be shown some cuffs and collars. She would have purchased a really pretty and suitable set of these for five shillings, but just as she was going to do so, another, exceedingly showy, for fifteen and sixpence, caught her eye. This one was trimmed with real lace, though of a coarse kind, and Lettice remembered with quite a pang the lace on Miss Agatha Hope's bonnet. 'Of course they despise imitations,' said she to herself; 'real ladies always do, unless they are *poor* ladies, and *they* are worse than we are. But this lace is lovely, quite. It looks as if it was *made* for a black silk dress; and really, when Frank gives me such a handsome dress, I owe it to him to have lace to match it, and not to disgrace it with trumpery,' and so Mrs. Tippington fulfilled the duty she owed her husband by running in debt fifteen shillings and sixpence, or more properly speaking, nineteen shillings, for the gloves were unpaid for also; which debt her conscience told her she should carefully conceal from him, for she knew it would annoy him, and she did not feel that she had the courage to avow it. And this was the return she made him for his

kind and generous present of a really handsome silk dress.

When Lettice reached the Castle, she felt more trepidation than she had expected, in ringing the bell and informing the butler that she wished to see Miss Diana Hope, and that she had called by appointment.

The butler, she could not help admitting to herself, was a very fine gentleman, for whom she would have felt considerable respect if she had not been a visitor to his mistresses. He called a smart-looking girl with a bunch of pink ribands on a dab of lace, surmounting a friz of hair, on her head, and told her that Mrs. Tippington had called to see Miss Diana. It was evident that she was expected, and the girl led her up the broad handsome stairs, and along a vast lobby at the top of them, into a charming apartment with glass doors, opening into a balcony which overhung the garden.

The room was furnished with that mixture of useful things and of trumpery common to school-rooms wherein growing up girls have grown up, and have from time to time been allowed to make additions themselves to the original arrangements of the room. To Lettice's eyes it all appeared charming, but then anything at the Castle would have appeared charming to her eyes.

But the most charming part of it was, that Diana

came forward in a very friendly manner, and to her extreme satisfaction shook hands with her.

‘That’s right,’ she cried heartily. ‘I say, I am so glad you’ve come. Agatha has left home on a visit, and little Doe and I have got it all to ourselves.’

She spoke rapidly without stops, and ran one word into another.

Little Doe was a tall slip of a girl of fifteen, in petticoats short enough to show her ankles, and clinging helplessly to her rather lanky figure. Her long fair hair was combed off her face, and hung in one thick plaited tail down her back. In short, everything possible was done to her to show that she was not yet grown up. Her features were rather large and marked, but that was in great measure owing to her extreme thinness; and there was considerable promise of future beauty in them and in her figure also, though she would probably be on a larger scale, and not so handsome as her sister Diana.

‘I hope you did not mind the trouble of coming here, Mrs. Tippington?’ said Diana graciously; ‘and I hope that you take no end of interest in our school feast and our glees and all that?’

‘I’m sure I will. Of course I do.’

‘I don’t, then,—horrid rubbish! Balderdash!—only we have to do it, or papa will be angry; and it is *not* pleasant when papa is angry, I do assure you.’

‘Oh, we shall be all right, Di. Now Aggy is gone,’ said little Doe consolingly, ‘you and I, Di, will be as snug as birds in a nest.’

‘That we shall, Doe. It’s high jinks to have got rid of Ag,—Hag, as we call her, Mrs. Tippington, when she gets *quite* past bearing. But we only do that now and then—generally on Sundays. We don’t indulge ourselves too much on week days, you know. But still, even without Aggy, it’s a bore *and* a nuisance going down to practice to-morrow, and the feast, and everything else, when one has such *much* more important things to think about,’ said Diana thoughtfully; ‘so I took a fancy to ask you up here, Mrs. Tippington, because I was sure that you would not be a bore *or* a nuisance, don’t you see? And, now Agatha’s gone, it’s really jolly!’

‘Indeed, Miss Hope, I was glad to come.’

‘Now about the glees; what shall we have? Shall we try over some we have already practised, or fix on something new? What would you say to “Have you seen my fisherman?” or “Is it wise?”’ and she hummed a few notes of each air as she spoke and laughed archly.

‘Sure those are not glees, Miss Hope,’ replied Lettice.

‘Oh, Di,’ cried her sister much excited, ‘did he sing “Is it wise to despise” yesterday? You never told me that!’

‘Hush, little Doe. Hold that naughty tongue of yours. Are you going to turn traitor in your old age? For shame!’

‘Oh, Di, you know I didn’t—you know I wouldn’t. I betray you? Not for the world — I only meant’— cried little Doe, her face covered with blushes.

Lettice instinctively blushed too, though she hardly knew why; but Miss Diana Hope’s cheeks were not troubled by any additional shade of pink.

Then the three girls sang glees for the next half-hour, Diana playing, the other two standing behind her, and all singing their best.

‘You have a very nice voice,’ Diana told Lettice. ‘You only require more teaching, and you will sing very well; but as it is even, you are quite an acquisition for our school feast—horrid thing!’

‘And why is it that you dislike it so much?’ Lettice ventured to ask.

‘It’s goody, and I hate everything goody; don’t you?’

Lettice laughed, but she made no answer, for an excellent reason, which was that she did not know what to say.

After some time spent in chat, in which Miss Diana rattled away, and little Doe took her full share, and Lettice made small replies and still smaller remarks, she thought she ought to take her leave.

But one thing all this while was weighing heavily on her mind, and this was her earnest desire to disabuse Miss Diana Hope of any idea that she was in the habit of serving in the shop. It is true that to that solitary instance of shop-serving she owed this delightful acquaintance, so she could not be said to regret it; and yet she did quite bitterly regret that it had not been possible for her to make the acquaintance in some other way, and she was dreadfully anxious that Miss Hope should understand that she did not live in the shop, but in the drawing-room above it,—a nice distinction, too nice, perhaps, for Miss Hope to distinguish the difference, but one of vital importance in Lettice's estimation. To live in the drawing-room was certainly genteel.

'If you are not wanting me any more, I'm thinking maybe I'll go home,' said she, beginning the little speech she had rehearsed to herself several times. 'Not that I'm required that way, you know. It is that I have letters to write. It is not the shop. I never do wait in it. It was just the merest chance the other day, and it was the first time I was ever there since I married; but I am very glad I was.'

Miss Diana Hope's face fell in a quite wonderful manner, and she stared in a blank way into Lettice's.

'You don't mean it!' she cried at last, like a

person who has received a sudden shock. 'You don't serve in the shop? Merciful Moses! and I wanted you to do something to help me!'

'Anything I can, I'll do to help you, with the greatest pleasure in life,' cried Lettice eagerly.

'But you can only do it by being in the shop.'

'Sure, I can be in the shop if I like it; nothing's easier.'

'Ah, can you? Yes; then that's all right. Gracious, what a turn you gave me!' said the young lady, recovering herself. 'Very well, look here.' She took a letter out of her pocket, without any address on it, as she spoke. 'Would you know that gentleman again who was fishing yesterday?'

'Deed I should, anywhere.'

'He will come to your shop about five o'clock this afternoon and buy something,—sealing-wax, notepaper, or some nonsense or other. Well, I want *you* to sell it to him, and while you are doing so to smuggle this letter into his hand; and nobody must see, remember, *nobody*. And not a single living creature must you tell a single word about it, not if it was to save your life. Promise! promise!'

'I promise,' replied Lettice, smiling and looking very knowing, very much interested, and very good-natured. 'I shall do it, and no one will see or hear anything. 'Deed they shall not.'

She spoke so earnestly, and looked so kind, that Miss Diana caught her hand, and then by sudden impulse kissed her.

‘Thank you, you nice, pretty thing!’ she said ; and so Lettice went home with the letter in her pocket, and Miss Diana Hope’s kiss on her cheek.





CHAPTER IX.

MANŒUVRING.

IT undoubtedly seemed to Lettice Tippington, as she tripped gaily home, as if her wildest and most improbable dreams were all going to be realized. It is true that she had married a shop, and she still heartily wished that her husband was in a more genteel profession ; but as for herself, notwithstanding this unhappy appendage, she found herself in very superior society to any she had ever enjoyed under her father's roof, or when on visits to her aunt ; or than it had entered into her head on her palmiest days, or when dreaming her most sanguine dreams for the future, that she ever could enjoy.

Such families as the Hopes of the Castle, the real gentry, had ever been to her and hers unapproachable, and regarded by them with attention and

admiration at a most respectful distance. And now she had been singled out by such, invited to spend a morning with them in the most blissful intimacy, had been asked to perform a service that must draw that intimacy still closer, and had been kissed at parting! She could hardly believe in her own superlatively good fortune, and trod on air all the way home.

‘Oh, blessed shop!’ she said to herself; ‘but for you, maybe this would none of it have happened. But however am I to manage to be left in you again, and so soon, too,—this very afternoon?’

Frank was in good humour (Lettice had begun to watch her husband’s humours now), chatty and pleasant at dinner, and Lettice was all smiles and graciousness. She narrated her morning’s adventures with extreme pleasure, only omitting any reference to the fisherman or the letter, while her hand continually stole into her pocket to finger the precious missive and make sure of its safety.

As dinner drew towards an end, and five o’clock came alarmingly near, she cleared her throat two or three times with a sort of a feeling that clear and easy speech might bring courage along with it; and at last, though it did not seem to her that the courage had come, she said rather feebly :

‘It’s not half bad fun being in the shop, Frank; but for that, maybe I’d never have known Miss Hope.’

‘I’m glad you’re coming to see that it’s not such a disgrace after all.’

‘I’m thinking, Frank dear, I’ll run in there now, instead of up-stairs. Pat’s out on errands.’

‘And will I run up-stairs and read poetry or embroider slippers?’ asked he, laughing.

‘And why shouldn’t you? Please yourself, only it’s into the shop I’m really going. There are the books, and I’m wanting to look over them.’

‘And it’s the books I thought you had looked over fifty times before now, Lettice. However, I’m sure I will have no objections, and if you can really stay there, maybe I will go out for half an hour. There are two or three things I’m wanting to do.’

Lettice felt more relief and pleasure at this than it was at all safe to show.

‘Do, if you like,’ she replied, keeping down her smiles as well as she could, ‘for it’s useful I’m going to make myself.’

‘Long may the whim last,’ said Frank laughingly, but he kissed her at the same time, and her conscience gave her a little prick when she saw that he looked pleased.

So the unsuspecting husband went out and the wife entered the shop, glancing at the clock, which was just on the stroke of five, as she did so.

She seated herself behind the counter, and taking up a book amused herself by reading. It happened

to be the same volume that she had opened the day before, and on this particular afternoon as she turned over the pages, the following text and set of verses greeted her eyes :—‘ He that walketh uprightly walketh surely : but he that perverteth his ways shall be known ’ (Prov. x. 9) ; ‘ The bread of deceit is sweet to a man ; but afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel ’ (Prov. xx. 17).

‘ Truth, which is itself complete,
Brings completeness to the soul ;
He who traffics in deceit
Never can be sound or whole.
Falsehood, for a moment sweet,
Ends in misery and doubt ;
Truth, which is itself complete,
Nothing is complete without.’

Lettice felt uncomfortable as she read these lines, but she satisfied herself by throwing the volume down and saying, ‘ That’s great stuff.’ Then she took it up again and turned over the pages.

‘ It’s a queer sort of a book, that it is,’ she said ; ‘ a text and a few verses for every day in the year. And if they’re none of them better or wiser than those I’ve read, I will not trouble them any more. It’s the verses I mean, of course. Texts must be right, because they come out of the Bible. But it’s a clergyman himself I’ve heard say, and in the pulpit too, that it’s not fair it is, to take a text by itself and judge it, without considering what comes

before itself and after itself too. And sure that is just what this book is doing, so I'll not mind it at all.' Then she looked at the clock and yawned.

'Oh my, I wonder when he shall come?' and then she felt in her pocket for the hundredth time, and found that the precious document was quite safe.

A girl came into the shop and asked for pens. Lettice supplied her, and took the money, feeling rather affronted at having to attend to any one who was not a lady or a gentleman; and immediately after that her heart gave a sudden great thump, and the colour rushed into her face, for he himself entered, strolling in a listless, idle sort of way, with his hands in his pockets and a cigar in his mouth. He took the cigar out when he was inside the shop, and threw it away through the door. Then he looked round him carelessly, and his eyes alighted on Lettice, who was recovering from her agitation with some little difficulty, and endeavouring to appear as unconcerned as he was.

He moved lazily up to the counter.

'Have you any'—here he paused and looked about him in a Dundrearyish sort of manner. 'I wonder what it is? Do you happen to know? Neckties? Mushrooms? Bicycles? No,' shaking his head drearily, 'none of these? What *have* you got, then?'

'It is a bookseller's and stationer's,' replied she encouragingly.

‘It is, is it? Thanks very much; yes, well, books and stationery, I suppose.’ Then, as if struck by a sudden bright thought, ‘*Have* you any books and stationery?’ and he stared up at her as he spoke so very much as if he was a real idiot, that she could not help laughing.

‘We have music also,’ she said, and she longed to quote one of the two songs she had heard by the river’s side. But she did not think he had recognised her, and she did not wish him to do so. It gave her an unreasonable but sincere pleasure to believe that he might for ever think of that girl for whom he had gathered primroses, whom he imagined a visitor at the Castle, and whom he had engaged to dance at the ball, as a lady, though the mere fact of his doing so would prevent his knowing that she was the same as the girl he found serving in a shop. If so, what good will this do her? Have we not said that her pleasure in the thought was wholly unreasonable?

‘Music!’ he cried; ‘why, that is the very thing. Show me some music, will you? Songs, marches, dirges, hymns; I’m not proud.’

Lettice produced a heap of music and laid it on the counter before him. Then her hand stole into her pocket, and she was just about to produce the letter for which she knew he had come, and place it on the music, when two old ladies bustled into the shop and demanded her immediate attention.

They wanted notepaper, and they wanted pens, and they wanted sealing-wax, and they were extremely particular as to all and each of these articles.

There was only one sort of paper, there was only one sort of pen, there was only one sort of sealing-wax, that they ever had used or ever could use ; and they *knew* that Mr. Tippington had them all, and therefore they would not be satisfied until they had all been produced. Lettice had to search everywhere for these articles, and to lay before her customers what she thought would satisfy them ; but they only rejected what she showed them with scorn and contumely, and it took so long to satisfy these two troublesome old ladies that she felt quite in despair as to how she was ever to obey Diana Hope's behest.

The fisherman, meantime, leant gracefully on the counter, and turned over the music with exemplary patience ; but his appearance in the shop decidedly interested the two old ladies, and they stole many glances at him in the course of their purchasing which did not make them any the quicker. Strangers were rare articles in Clanmena, especially strangers of such a presence as his.

At length they were contented with what they had found, and made their purchases. Lettice hoped that now they would surely go away, but this appeared to be as far as ever from their intentions.

‘And we hope Mr. Tippington is quite well?’ said one of them.

Lettice briefly gave assurance of his being so, feeling at the moment not nearly as much interested in her husband’s health as they did.

‘And Mr. Tippington is our very good friend,’ said the other, ‘and we have dealt with him ever since he opened the shop.’

‘And it’s his mother that we knew before she was married, the creature,’ said the one who had first spoken, with quite an air of triumph; ‘and we shall always feel interest in him for the mother’s sake.’

‘What a number of years ago that *must* be!’ cried youthful Lettice with an involuntary compassion in her voice, upon which the fisherman gave a low, chuckling laugh.

‘It’s not such a long time either,’ said the first old lady, bridling.

But the other said: ‘It’s long ago in *her* eyes. See now how young she is! I suppose it’s yourself that is Mr. Tippington’s wife, my dear?’ she added kindly. ‘And he has shown that he knows a pretty face when he sees it. Make him a good wife, then; that’s your duty. Handsome is that handsome does,’ and so at last, smiling and chattering, they went away. The fisherman fixed his gaze boldly and laughingly on Lettice’s face.

‘Certainly,’ he said, ‘Mr. Tippington *has* shown that he has eyes. Who *are* those two jolly old girls?’

‘I have not an idea,’ replied she, smiling and blushing. ‘I never saw them before. I never do serve in the shop, you know. It’s only to-day I came to’— Here her hand again entered her pocket, and she was just going to produce the letter when another customer came in. Lettice drew back disappointed, and the fisherman muttered something behind his beard which sounded uncommonly like ‘Confound the shop!’

This time the interruption was caused by Mr. Scott, the curate. He had come in a great hurry for some sermon paper; but as he was able to tell Lettice exactly the kind he wanted, and to point out the very place where it was kept, he did not occupy much of her time.

But he, too, had a few pleasant words to say to the beautiful young lady, whom he had never before seen in the shop, or indeed anywhere except in church; and he also had some curiosity to bestow on the gentlemanly stranger, to whom he made friendly salutations when he caught his eye, and, looking on the flies that decorated his hat, civilly asked him if he had good sport.

‘Pretty well,’ drawled the other, ‘only there are such a deuced number of interruptions,’ and he glanced significantly at Lettice.

‘You will find some quiet spots about two miles below the bridge, at the other side of the river,’ said the curate.

‘Oh, shall I?’ replied the fisherman; and as that was all he did reply, the curate naturally enough did not attempt to prolong the conversation, but went away.

Then Lettice determined to lose no more opportunities. She came up hastily to the heap of music on the counter, beside which the fisherman lolled. He looked steadily at her, and putting his open hand on the upper piece of music, he said, ‘I’ll take this.’

Instantly she produced the letter from her pocket, and laid it in his hand. He laughed, she smiled, their hands met, and he cried out, ‘Well done, by Jove!’

At that moment her husband entered the shop.



CHAPTER X.

THE FIRST FALSEHOOD.

WHEN her husband entered the shop, Lettice started back a yard from the counter, blushed up to the roots of her hair, and gave a little wild laugh. The fisherman, on the contrary, kept quite cool. He was leaning on his elbow among the music half over the counter, with the hand on it also into which Mrs. Tippington had put the letter, and he quietly remained in just the same attitude without stirring a hair's-breadth or showing the slightest symptom of discomposure.

Then he raised himself lazily from this position, and dropped the letter into his pocket, very much as if he was in the habit of receiving one from Mrs. Tippington's hands every day of his life; took up two or three pieces of music, and laying half a sovereign down on the counter, said, 'Ta, ta,' and

sauntered out of the shop, staring its master full in the face as he did so without taking any other notice of him.

As soon as he was gone, the husband and wife stood looking at each other in silence, which Lettice at last broke by giving utterance to another foolish little laugh.

Then Frank spoke, but he did not allude to what he was thinking of. He only said in a constrained, awkward way, 'Have you sold anything?'

Lettice pushed the half-sovereign towards him, and pointed to the music. In the confusion of her mind, she did not recollect the other things she had sold. But Frank took no notice of the money; he had not been thinking of buying and selling when he asked his question, which had only been spoken at all because he wanted to say something.

'Who is he?' he now abruptly inquired.

'Sure how should I know?' replied she.

'You don't know his name?'

'I do not. Ought I to ask the names of the customers?' said Lettice rather pertly; but that was only because she was trying to cover the embarrassment she felt.

'Is he the man you found fishing?' cried Frank with a suddenness that made her jump.

'He is,' she replied very unwillingly, and hanging her head.

'And what was that letter you gave him?' asked her husband.

'Letter?' faltered she aghast.

'Why, I saw you put it into his hand myself.'

'The letter, is it?' said Lettice, answering herself.

'Why, sure, he dropped it, and I gave it to him.'

Now this was the first falsehood that Lettice had ever told her husband, and she blushed scarlet as she said the words. But Frank entirely believed her, attributing her blushes to another cause.

'Lettice, dear,' he said, 'you were thoughtless in your way, but you didn't mean any harm. Maybe it's too young and too pretty you are to serve in a shop. After all, I don't think Donolly is right, saying you should do it.'

'I like serving in the shop,' said Lettice wilfully.

'That is quite a new notion, then,' said her husband; 'but this is how it is, Lettice. Sure you didn't mean anything, and it's all very well in a parlour among those who know you. It's a little way that the pretty girls have, I suppose; and how are they to help it? I remember,' he added, smiling, 'I did not think it a bad little way at Rostrevor. But it does not do across a counter; leastways, not when it is a gentleman that you are selling to.'

'And what is it that does not do, if you please?'

'What is it, then? Why, it's the smile, and the

meaning look, and the way you handed him the be of paper. I'm not blaming you, dear, but unless you can put on a shop manner, you had better not serve in a shop, and that is just the long and the short of what I am saying.'

Lettice had, as I said, never told her husband a downright falsehood before, and when she saw how he trusted her and believed her, her conscience gave her a sharp, sudden prick.

But I am afraid when we cross the Channel and put foot on that green island which lies beyond it, there is no doubt that the standard of truth we find there is neither so high nor so bright as that which we leave behind us in England. Truth, pure and undefiled, is the most beautiful thing in the world ; and it is a great pity that a people like the Irish, who have so many brilliant and attractive qualities, do not set a right value on this best quality of all. And I am afraid that Lettice, being a thorough Irishwoman, rather enjoyed the little plot that she had been so unexpectedly asked to take a share in carrying out, and the acting on her part that her share in it necessitated ; and though her conscience did, as I have said, give her a sharp prick when she found she had been hurried into telling her husband a downright falsehood, yet, far from really making her unhappy, she quickly and easily found excuses even for that.

'He may thank himself for it,' she said to herself; 'he had no call to ask me the questions. How could I help it when I had promised Miss Hope? And of course I shall be able to tell him all about it some day or other; so it is not to deceive him I'm wishing, and I could not help it, and he ought not to have asked me. It is *his* fault, it's not mine; and it's very disagreeable of him to have forced me to tell a lie when I had rather not,' and so the husband and wife went up-stairs on very fairly good terms with themselves and each other.

Lettrice informed Frank that she must attend the practising that evening, and he made no objection at all, merely saying that he was extremely sorry that he could not take her there, as he had a great deal of business to attend to; but if he possibly could, he would come and fetch her, and if not, she could walk back with Mrs. Donolly, who would certainly be there.

'I will not mind walking alone,' was her reply, 'it's what I've always been used to; and now I am a married woman,' with a pretty little air of importance, 'sure, it's the right thing, and I will have to do it.'

'Only I like walking with you,' answered her husband, laughing.

'You do, of course, and so do I with you. Sure,

we have not been married long enough for us to tire of that, then?' she said coquettishly.

'Oh, Lettice,' said Frank warmly, 'and I hope we will only care the more for each other the longer we've been married. And why not? It's myself that never knows why it is not so always, and why it's supposed that when people are married they will get tired of what they meant to love best in the world. Sure, they need not. Why, look at the Donollys; and it's six years that the Donollys have been married if it's a day, and only look at them! Sure, it's they that enjoy a walk on an evening together just as much as ever they did when they were lovers.'

'Can't you say a *tête-à-tête*, dear?' replied Lettice. 'Anyway, I am tired of the Donollys. The name of them is on the tip of your tongue and comes first for everything. The Donollys, indeed; maybe there will be nothing so wonderful about the Donollys after all. It's the Hopes I like better.'

'The Hopes!' exclaimed Frank, quite taken aback; 'set you up with the Hopes, indeed! It's great people they are. We have nothing to do with the likes of them; how should we? And Donolly is my particular friend.'

'Have not we, then?' said Lettice, nodding her pretty little head in a knowing and rather consequential manner. 'Maybe I have a deal to do with

the Hopes ; and if Donolly is your particular friend, will it surprise you to find that Miss Diana Hope is mine ?'

Her husband only laughed at that, and answered, 'Sure, you know, that is too ridiculous.'

'Is it, then ?' said Lettice demurely. 'We will see what we will see. Husbands are always in the right, and wives in the wrong. Leastways, husbands are men, and wives, poor things, are only women ; but time shall show,' and here she pursed up her mouth and looked so extremely pretty that Frank, instead of being annoyed with her, could only kiss her.

Soon after this Lettice set out for the practising at the schoolhouse. She went down the streets and turned into the lane that led to it with light heart and dancing steps.

'I suppose something pleasant will happen,' she said to herself ; 'leastways, pleasant things have *taken* to happening just as matters of course,' and as she said this the pleasantest thing that in her opinion could have occurred took place, for Miss Diana Hope jumped over a stile and joined her, followed by little Doe.

Miss Hope shook hands with her in the most affable manner possible, and little Doe followed her example.

'This *is* a jolly lark,' cried the former young lady ;

'I always *do* fall on my feet. I say, you dear creature, you are just the one person I wanted to see—and'—

'Not quite the only one. Hey, Di?'

said little Doe.

'Hould yer tongue when yer spake to yer betters, naughty child,' cried the lively young lady, shaking her fingers threateningly at her; 'little girls should be seen and not heard. Now, Mrs. Tippington,—that's your name, is not it?—mind you keep next me at the practising. My! what a pretty thing you are! I wish I was half as pretty, that I do!'

'Don't say "my," Di,' said little Doe rather sentimentously. 'If you say "my" in England, you will be thought downright vulgar. I know you will, for Georgina told me so.'

'Sure I do not think much of the English, Miss Doe; do you?' asked Lettice in her die-away manner. 'It's the English, then, that will not be half as aristocratic as the Irish; will they, now?' Both the girls laughed.

'Only Di thinks ever so much of the English,' cried little Doe.

'Is *he* English, then?' exclaimed Lettice, and she spoke quite naturally in her sudden interest, at which both the girls laughed still more.

'Oh, Mrs. Tippington! Oh, come now, how imprudent! You must not allude—you must not, indeed,' they cried, one saying one sentence, and the

other following her up with the next ; for little Doe seemed to understand all about it quite as well as her grown-up sister.

Lettice coloured very much indeed, and begged their pardon with great seriousness.

‘Did you give—you know who—you know what?’ demanded Diana solemnly, at which little Doe went off into inextinguishable fits of laughter.

‘Deed I did,’ replied Lettice earnestly.

‘I say, I think he will come to bring an answer,’ continued Diana very mysteriously and confidentially; ‘so I do hope you will manage to be in the shop to receive it.’

‘I do hope I will,’ replied Lettice as earnestly as if her life depended on it; ‘but it’s not easy I’ll find it. Men *are* contradictory. When I wouldn’t have such a thing evened to me, Mr. Tippington was wishing me to serve in the shop; and now that I’m wanting it of all things, he’ll not hear of it.’

‘Men *are* contradictions,’ said Diana solemnly; ‘but then women are circumventions. I don’t wish to say much about it, don’t you see; but this I will say, that if I was a man—saving your presence—I would rather not have a woman trying to circumvent me; and when it comes to two women’—

‘Three women, Di—do say three women, please,’ put in little Doe entreatingly.

'Very well, Doe,' answered her sister; 'let us say three women, then. Poor Mr. Tippington!'

By this time they had reached the schoolhouse, and the three women, as they called themselves, though not one of them had yet reached twenty years of age, entered it together, and together took their places at the upper end of the room.

Perhaps Lettice had never felt so happy in her life. She looked round her proudly and gaily, delighting in her position, both for her own feelings of importance and the feelings of envy that she was sure she must be exciting in the others.

She was charmed when Miss Diana Hope whispered something in her ear, and when she found herself actually sitting beside her.

It was a subject of the greatest pleasure to Lettice that Mrs. Donolly was there to witness her triumph.

For some reason or other, that lady had come late, and she had grown very uneasy at her absence, fearing that perhaps she was not coming at all, though she believed that such a goody person as Mrs. Donolly would not neglect such a goody meeting as this was. The fact that she appeared to be doing so, and consequently that Lettice might be prevented from airing her grand friends in her eyes, occupied her thoughts so much that she could not help expressing them to Miss Hope.

'I do wonder that Mrs. Donolly is not here,' she said with a good deal of emphasis.

'Mrs. Donolly?' replied Diana simply; 'who is she?' and it sent quite a shock through Lettice to find that Mrs. Donolly's very existence was unknown to Miss Diana Hope—Mrs. Donolly, who in various ways, and for various reasons was, in her world, quite an important person, and who until yesterday she had been rather proud of reckoning among her friends.

'You don't know?' she answered quite timidly.

'No,' said Diana; 'I don't know the name. There's Donolly the wine merchant, from whom papa gets his common sherry, but that's the only Donolly I ever heard of in Clanmena. Is it his wife or mother you mean? or has he a wife or a mother?'

Lettice was silent, but she had learned, through Miss Hope's ignorance of the very existence of Mrs. Donolly, a lesson in the insignificance to one person of that which is of extreme importance in the eyes of another. While pondering on this, to her youthful inexperience, rather unknown fact, something made her raise her eyes and look at the window opposite to her; and there, in the soft but deepening twilight of the summer evening, she saw a sight that filled her with surprise.



CHAPTER XI.

THE FISHERMAN AGAIN.

HT was the fisherman's handsome face, set in the frame of the window, and with bright eyes fixed on *her*, that almost drew an exclamation of astonishment from Lettice's lips. She could not help giving a little start, and the man she started at immediately perceived that he had been recognised, and held up a square of something white for one passing rapid second, so that she saw it distinctly, and then, with it still in his hand, disappeared as noiselessly and suddenly as he had appeared.

Lettice was at first thoroughly puzzled, and could not imagine what he meant, and why he had shown himself to her in so strange a manner. Then it occurred to her that the square of white was a letter, an answer to the one she had given

him that afternoon, and that he meant her to understand that he would find some method of conveying it to her on her way home.

She longed to let Diana Hope know what she had seen, but did not dare to do so with so many people about them.

'How do you go home, Miss Hope?' she asked rather abruptly.

'Papa fetches us, more's the pity. He is coming in to hear the glees, and we all walk home together,' and Miss Diana made an undutiful face as she spoke.

Then she and Lettice, both of them, had to give up their attention to the glees, during the performance of which Mr. Hope—a tall, stern-looking man—joined his daughters, who from that moment took no more notice of Lettice than of the other performers.

At last the meeting broke up, and while the members were sorting and collecting music, Miss Diana Hope contrived to catch hold of Lettice's hand under the table, and to give it a warm and significant pressure. This pleased Lettice, for she had been vexed at the change in her friend's manner; but she would have been still more pleased at an open recognition and adieu that all the room, and especially Mrs. Donolly, might have seen, for that would have flattered her vanity (and I am sorry

to be obliged to confess that vanity was a very prominent feature in my heroine's character).

She left the room in a flutter of expectation as to what the walk home might bring about. There could, she thought, be little doubt that the fisherman would join her, and give her the letter. Fresh from all the sweet enjoyment of her own love affair, Lettice was able to throw herself into intense sympathy with that of another. Love was to her the one thing that coloured or even formed life. It was the atmosphere she breathed—she, who had so recently been offered, and had accepted it, and whose whole life had been, through it, changed. To help any one in love was to her at once a sweet pleasure and a bounden duty; and true love, the course of which did not run smooth, was deeply interesting, and if her hand could help to smooth it, that would be almost too delightful. Added to all this, the principal performers in this love affair were gentlefolks, and *she* was elected the confederate of the lady. Happy she!

It was a great annoyance to her that Mr. and Mrs. Donolly joined her as she left the schoolhouse, and evidently considered it as a matter of course that they should walk home with her. Had they not done so, there would have been no difficulty in receiving the letter, and she might even have had the escort of a real gentleman, as the fisherman, she

had no doubt, was lurking somewhere near, and only waiting for an opportunity to join her.

She looked disdainfully at Mr. Donolly, considering how very unlike a real gentleman he was. What badly cut clothes ! what a vulgar way of walking ! and he—alas ! and alas !—he was Frank's best friend, and beyond any doubt his superior in the social grade. Donolly, whose name Miss Hope had never heard, except as the man from whom her papa bought his common sherry, and of the existence of whose wife she was ignorant—alas ! and alas ! But, notwithstanding this, her heart, loyal through all its vanity and folly to the husband she loved, assured her that Frank, whatever his position and whoever his friends, was a perfect gentleman himself, in appearance, manners, and mind.

'Frank can't get out to-night, I suppose?' she found that his obnoxious friend was asking her ; and she assumed all the grandeur and affectation of manner in her power before she replied :

'He is engaged on business for Mr. Hope, I believe. He is Mr. Hope's right hand, I think.'

Mr. and Mrs. Donolly, who knew Frank's affairs at least as well as she did, and that all he did for Mr. Hope was to occasionally sell him books and note-paper, were extremely amused ; and Mr. Donolly could not keep from replying in what Lettice called 'his brutal manner' :

‘He deals with him now and then, I know.’

‘Deals with him, Mr. Donolly? What an expression!’ and Lettice closed her eyes as if, affected by her sensitive mind, she was actually in physical pain.

‘What’s wrong with it?’ was the sturdy reply. ‘He *does* deal with him, though not so much as I should be glad to see. And he deals with me too, Mrs. Tippington.’

‘Yes, I know he does,’ cried Lettice, losing all her affectation and speaking quickly enough, for she could not withstand making the retort. ‘Miss Diana Hope told me that he bought his common sherry from you.’

A bright colour rose into Mary Donolly’s pretty cheeks, both at the words and at the manner in which they were spoken, but her husband laughed and pressed her arm reassuringly.

‘And very much obliged I am to him for it,’ he said heartily. ‘And it’s worth a good fifty pounds a year to me that he does. His port and his champagne, and all the rest of it, he imports from London no less; but he says there is not a better table sherry in London than I give him, or at a more moderate figure,—forty-eight shillings a dozen,—and as wholesome a wine as you could wish to taste, I can tell you.’

‘Imagine giving forty-eight shillings a dozen for common sherry!’ sighed Lettice, quite surprised by

the fact out of her affectation. 'My aunt gave two shillings a bottle for her company sherry. It's a fine thing to be rich.'

She bit her lips, regretting that she had made this admission, though she had always been rather proud of that very wine at two shillings a bottle, as it was so much more genteel than spirits.

'That wasn't sherry at all,' said the wine merchant; 'it might be honest Marsala, or brandy and water with brown sugar in it, as the case may be. Some customers insist on having that brandy and water with treacle or sugar, and I'm obliged to give it to them, and call it sherry; but I always tell them that our honest Marsala at the same price is a much better wine. And I make my wife take a glass of it every day, for the doctor ordered it to her since she has not been strong, and he told me there was no better wine I could give her than my own twenty-four shilling Marsala.'

'Do you drink wine every day, Mrs. Donolly?' asked Lettice, confessing to herself that it was a very genteel thing to do.

'Did you feel the light of that window just opposite to you in the schoolhouse hurt your eyes, Mrs. Tippington?' asked Mr. Donolly rather suddenly.

Lettice blushed scarlet. Had he seen the fisherman and the square of white?

'How could I,' she answered after a minute's pause, 'and the darkness coming on?'

'Who was that chap looking in with something white in his hand, I wonder?' continued he rather pointedly.

'I did not see any one,' replied his wife.

'Did *you* see any one, Mrs. Tippington?' he persisted.

'I?' faltered Lettice. 'I don't know. I think there was some one; I was not attending.'

'Do you know who he is?'

'No,' she cried boldly, and recovering herself, for she could answer this truly, not knowing his name or anything about him.

Then Lettice determined to change the subject, and talk of something else, and that it should be something Mr. Donolly could not join in.

'How inconvenient it is not putting pockets in a dress!' she said, addressing Mrs. Donolly. 'They've sent me home a dress without a pocket in it, outside or inside, and here I am with my handkerchief in my hand, and no place to put a thing in if I wanted it. It's genteel to have no inside pockets, Mrs. Donolly, because you couldn't be tied back if you had them; but a pocket outside your dress has a *degagée* look I like, and is quite convenient.'

At that moment, while the words were still almost

on her lips, Lettice heard herself addressed from behind by a voice she knew well, and which made her jump.

‘I beg your pardon, but I think I saw this fall out of your pocket.’ It was the fisherman, and he held out to her a square of white, being in fact a letter unaddressed.

Blushing, and with downcast eyes, Lettice was extending her hand to take it ; but Mr. Donolly, who was between her and the fisherman, prevented her.

‘The lady has no pocket, sir,’ he said civilly, ‘and did not drop anything ; it must belong to some one else.’

Lettice let her hand fall, and the fisherman bowed and passed on.

The three continued their walk, Lettice’s eyes still fixed on the ground and her appearance embarrassed, Mr. Donolly silent and apparently uncomfortable ; but his wife spoke quite easily.

‘What an uncommonly good-looking young man !’ she remarked.

‘Handsome is that handsome does,’ replied her husband, glancing askance at Lettice. ‘It looked rather like an uncommonly impudent way of making acquaintance, if you never saw him before?’ he added, with some anxiety in his manner, and throwing so much of a question into the words that it was difficult for Lettice not to answer it.

‘Many know Tom Fool whom Tom Fool doesn’t know,’ replied Lettice demurely.

‘It’s a great acquaintance you had at Rostrevor, I’m supposing, Mrs. Tippington?’ was the next question.

Lettice was amused. She saw he was completely on the wrong scent, and suspected that the fisherman was an old friend known to her before her marriage, whom for some reason she did not wish to acknowledge—perhaps an old lover of hers, instead of a new one of Miss Diana’s. This idea entertained her. That the wise Mr. Donolly had taken up a wrong notion, and was disturbed by it, was very pleasant, and that she could ‘play him’ was delightful. She felt mischievous, for her heart was light with youth and joy. So she gave an affected little start.

‘Rostrevor?’ said she. ‘Are you a witch, Mr. Donolly? What put Rostrevor into your head just now, I wonder? Rostrevor? Yes, indeed. Poor old Rostrevor! it’s many a one I knew there, and some that won’t forget me in a hurry.’

‘And I’m sure Frank will be glad enough to see any of your acquaintances that call on him,’ replied the other pointedly.

‘That’s as it may be,’ said Lettice with an affected laugh. ‘Oh, Mrs. Donolly, did you ever see such a beautiful moon rising before? I never

can believe it's the same moon that comes every month back to us. They are so different, and some of them so much prettier and even more friendly-looking than others!'

They paused at a gate, and straight before them into the heavens rapidly rose a large, beautiful, almost round moon, making a soft silvery light all about herself in the sky, and bathing the earth in a light only less beautiful as the earthly must be less beautiful than the skyey. The three friends leaned on the gate, with their backs to the road and their faces to the sky, quite entranced by the glory that had so suddenly been added to the sylvan scene. Perfect stillness reigned around them—a stillness which, the next moment, was abruptly broken in a very strange manner.

A man's voice rose in the air singing. The performer was somehow and somewhere concealed, but he must have been near them, as the fine tenor voice was heard to great advantage, and the words were given with unusual distinctness :

'Where did the fisher go?
When will he come again?
Pray—pray—let me know :
I like the fishermen !

'Down by the little bridge
Where silver waters glide,
Close by the pebble ridge,
There doth the fisher hide.

'What doth the fisher there?
Is he waiting for me?
Is he fishing with care?
Oh, let us run and see!

'Still doth the fisher stand,
Just as the clock strikes two,
With his fish in his hand:
He is waiting for you.'

As the last notes of the song died away on the evening air, Lettice burst into a fit of ringing girl-laughter perfectly irrepressible, though after the first moment she did her best to check it. Mr. and Mrs. Donolly looked at her in surprise, and, hardly knowing what she did, she begged their pardon.

'Were you laughing at the song?' Mrs. Donolly asked. 'It was very pretty, but surely it was not comic.'

Lettice said nothing to that, but presently remarked that she had been laughing at something she was thinking of.

Mr. Donolly was looking at her very attentively, and with not at all pleased eyes.

The three walked on together, in rather constrained silence. When they reached that part of the town in which their paths separated, Lettice gladly held out her hand to wish them good-night; but Mr. Donolly said in a sturdy way that she could not contradict, that he should see her safe to her own door before he left her. So to her own

door he saw her, and did not turn away with his wife till Lettice had crossed the threshold.

Mrs. Donolly had told her husband how Lettice had patronized her, and he had been quite indignant. That gentle and kind-hearted lady now said :

‘I am afraid I was rather hard on that pretty young creature to-day, and vexed you with her when there was maybe but little reason. It’s natural that she should be pleased by the gentry taking such notice of her.’

‘There are two ways of being pleased, Mary, and I’m not a bit pleased when my little woman is not treated properly.’

‘She was not really thinking about *me*, you know, Brian. It was just that she wanted any one to see how Miss Hope thought of her.’

‘Set her up with Miss Hope! Maybe it’s only making use of her she is for the glees.’

‘Only she does not make use of any of us in the same way. She likes her sweet young face ; and sure, Brian, it *is* a sweet young face she has, and a pretty one too.’

‘Handsome is that handsome does,’ said Brian stoutly. ‘I’m afraid my friend Frank has a great deal of troubles before him yet ; and I wish I could see a bright end to the troubles, which I don’t, the more’s the pity.’

‘I don’t know they are very fond of each other.

They are quite happy now, and I don't see why they will not be always so.'

'He is very fond of her ; but is she of him ?'

'She is, I have not a doubt of it ; if I knew it no other way, I've seen it in her eyes, and I'm sure of it.'

'You are too simple for her, maybe, my dear. Some women can put anything into their eyes. What will you say if she has cared for somebody else, and cares for him still ?'

Mary Donolly turned appalled eyes on her husband.

'Oh, Brian,' she cried, 'how unlike you to say anything so shocking ! I am quite certain that she cares only for her husband, that she is really in love with him, and that she has a good heart.'

'So be it,' replied Brian Donolly almost solemnly ; and there was a short silence between the husband and wife, which was presently broken, as is usually the case in such silences, by the latter.

'She need not have said that about Mr. Hope buying his common sherry from you,' she remarked with a touch of resentment in her voice.

'Never mind that,' replied Brian good-humouredly. 'If that is the worst thing she has to say, she may have her fling ; leastways, her patronizing you is worse than my cheap wine.'

'Sure I've forgiven her for that,' said Mary, smiling, 'though it wasn't pleasant at the moment.'

Lettice ran gaily into the house, and Frank received her with a kiss, and told her how sorry he was he could not fetch her.

‘Frank,’ she cried, ‘do tell me where the bridge is over the river ; and is it a little bridge, and is there a ridge of pebbles any way near it ?’

‘It is, and there is,’ answered he ; ‘and a prettier spot you never saw, Lettice. I will take you there some day, and you will be delighted.’

‘But where is it, Frank ?’

‘Sure it’s a good little bit down the river by the old road, maybe a mile or more ; and then there’s a lane all full of flowers, where the river turns off from the road ; and it’s there that the bridge and the pebbles are, and a pretty spot it is.’

‘What are you going to do to-morrow, Frank ?’

‘Is it that you want me to take you there ? I will if I can, before dinner.’

‘Before dinner ! and the days are so hot, and it’s the evenings that are the nice time for walking. No, I thank you. If that is all you can do for me, I’ll go without you.’

‘You will not. I don’t like you to be walking about alone, Lettice ; leastways not by the river, when the gentlemen are fishing. But I’ll go with you in the cool of the evening, if that likes you better, dear ; and you may stay at home in the morning, as a man’s wife should do to mind her house.’

‘And what is minding a house, Frank? *How* am I to mind it?’ asked Lettice plaintively.

‘Go into your kitchen, and look over your linen presses, and dust your chairs; and when all else is done, have an eye to my clothes, which are one and all in worse condition than I ever knew them before.’

‘Oh, your clothes!’ groaned Lettice. ‘Sure that is a part of being married I never thought of at all. It ought to be in the service, I’m thinking, among the vows we take. When you say, “With all my worldly goods I thee endow,” I ought to answer, “And all thy clothes I’ll mend.”’

‘There’s enough and plenty to joke about without taking the words that are said in church, Lettice,’ replied her husband.

‘I hope you are not a prig, Frank?’ said Lettice severely.

Frank laughed.

‘I am not,’ he said, ‘and Donolly is not one either; and I’m not wanting to be preaching to you, my dear, I’m only wanting you to be the nice, good little wife I meant you to be.’

‘So I am,’ answered Lettice.



CHAPTER XII.

WHITE LIES.

NOW was Lettice to manage to escape from home and husband on this beautiful spring day, and run down to the little bridge, where she was perfectly certain the fisherman awaited her with a letter for Diana Hope in his hand—that very letter which, by Mr. Donolly's officiousness, he had not been able to give her yesterday, though it had been so close to her hand that she might have grasped and kept it if she had dared to do so?

How was she to manage? Frank had desired her not to go to the bridge by herself, and his reason had been that she might not fall in with any of the gentlemen fishers who frequented the river; and it was to meet one of these very gentlemen fishers she was going. But then, Lettice argued to herself, that

was only because Frank did not know. Had he known, he could not have objected to her going to this particular bridge, or meeting this particular man. Lettice argued this in absolute ignorance of her husband's real character. Had she known him better, she would have been sure that he would have made still stronger objections to her making herself a go-between in a clandestine love affair.

But even if she had been right in her argument, and if Frank would have permitted her to go to meet the fisherman by the bridge if he had known what her errand was, I need hardly point out that Lettice was very wrong to go after what he had said, as she was acting in flat disobedience to his wishes ; but at this period in her life, Lettice had very little idea of the meaning of the obedience that a wife owes to her husband. Frank had spoilt her during his courtship, and it did not occur to her that there ought to be any difference now. The excitement of this affair she found extremely amusing ; and though she looked forward with great pleasure to the time when, Diana Hope happily married, she should be able to tell him of how much she had done to assist the bringing about of this much-to-be-desired event, still she had not the least objection to the rôle she had now to play in keeping him in the dark ; and the romance of the thing was delicious to her, and all the more so from having been so recently in love herself.

Frank being busy in the shop, while Pat was out carrying round the monthly magazines and weekly newspapers, Lettice dressed herself for her walk, and merely put her head into the shop to tell him that she was intending to take a turn before dinner. To her great relief, he was busy with a customer, which she considered quite a sufficient reason for not interrupting him. If he was vexed with her for going out without telling him, she could say how she had come to do so, but finding him occupied had abstained. So she slipped out at the other door, and, light of foot and light of heart, proceeded on her interesting expedition.

As she passed Vellacot's, she saw Miss Diana Hope in the shop, who ran eagerly to the door, and detaining her, spoke in a whisper :

'Have you got it?'

'No ; I am going for it.'

'Hurrah !' she said—this also in a whisper, and a hurrah in a whisper has a curious sound.

'I'll come to the shop about six o'clock for it. Oh, that blessed shop ! what should we do without it ?' An earnest squeeze of her hand, a smiling, roguish glance, and Miss Hope was gone.

Lettice felt elated, and wished that Mrs. Donolly had seen the whispered conference and the parting pressure, both speaking of a familiarity which must surprise her, and perhaps would have excited her envy.

Down the old road for 'the good little bit' that Frank had described to her, and then up it through the lane by which the river ran, an abrupt turn brought her full in sight of the rustic bridge and the pebble ridge, and of the fisherman standing beside them like a statue, with his arm extended, and the square bit of white in it. And as she approached nearer, the statue sang :

' There does the fisher stand,
Just as the clock strikes two,
With his fish in his hand :
He is waiting for you ;'

and as he sang the words 'with his fish,' he waved the square bit of white about in the air significantly.

'Hush!' cried Lettice; 'how imprudent! Suppose any one was near?'

'I stand corrected,' replied he, putting himself into a penitent attitude. 'How very, very good it is of you to come and help us! I am the most unfortunate, ill-treated man in the world. That old scoundrel, Hope, won't let me come near his daughter just because I am poor, and because he wants to marry her to an old baronet with heaps of money, a wooden leg, and no character at all.'

'A wooden leg!' cried Lettice, horrified.

'Upon my word and honour,' answered he. 'I

believe the fellow has *two* wooden legs ; he is quite capable of it.'

'And no character?' added Lettice, with the pleased thought that Frank would highly approve of what she was doing. She was helping to rescue this charming girl from a mercenary marriage with a man of no character, and very probably two wooden legs. She felt like a philanthropist, almost like a missionary, and rose considerably in her own estimation while she faintly ejaculated the words, 'And no character?'

'Not a ha'porth,' cried the fisherman ; 'I do assure you he has not. Not enough to set up a cock-robin in business—there!' He waved his hand with the air of a man who has said something quite unanswerable, and Lettice laughed gaily as he did so.

'Now take your letter, you kind angel,' he cried, and the square bit of white passed rapidly from his hand to hers. 'But how will you deliver it? Alas! if you had really wings, and could flutter into her room, and, hey presto, it's done! What right,' he added discontentedly, 'has an angel to be without wings? In *my* opinion it's a breach of privilege.'

Again Lettice laughed ; she liked to be called an angel, and she also thought that the fisherman said the most amusing things she had ever heard a man

say. Certainly Miss Diana Hope would lead a delightful life as his wife. They would ramble about the country fishing, singing, and laughing. Lettice could imagine nothing more delicious, and life over the shop seemed a little tame in comparison.

‘I must go,’ she said, suddenly waking out of these thoughts ; ‘I shall be wanted at home.’

‘I wish I was wanted at home,’ he answered, making a dismal face ; ‘but I don’t know how I could be advertised for with the word “Wanted” in capital letters at the beginning. I never am wanted. People seem more inclined to kick me out of their houses than to want me inside them.’

‘Sure you must not judge every one else by Mr. Hope,’ said Lettice good-naturedly, anxious to console him.

‘Sweet was the kindly thought
Gilding this life of mine,
One little minute brought
Forth from that heart of thine.

‘Thou mayest condemn me through
All the years that are mine ;
Nothing, dear, can undo
That little thought of thine,’

sang the fisherman, in that sweet tenor of his that held Lettice enthralled.

Common sense and common discretion did at last make their voices heard, and Lettice took a very friendly leave of this good and charming young singer, who was bent on rescuing the beautiful Diana Hope from a fate almost too horrible to contemplate; for Lettice, married to the man she loved, could imagine nothing more dreadful than a marriage without affection. And if the man who was not loved had also a bad character and two wooden legs, any act of any kind was justifiable that prevented a marriage with *him*, and defeated the intentions of the tyrannical and wicked father.

Lettice almost ran home, she was so afraid of Frank discovering her absence and making a scene about it. If he was disagreeable and troublesome, she might have to tell him another story, and she did not at all wish to do that. Of course, if she had to do it, it would be his own fault for being disagreeable and troublesome, but still she would avoid it if possible. How she was also to avoid the walk he meant to take her that evening, and stay at home and be alone in the shop, so as to keep her appointment with Miss Hope, she could not at all tell. She supposed she should have to say she had a headache. That was not a lie, or if it was, it was a very white one. Her aunt always said she had a headache when she wanted an

excuse either for not doing or for doing anything, and why should not her head be as convenient as her aunt's? Yes, it would be quite easy for her to have a headache, and to stay in the house; but then in all probability Frank would stay in the house also with her. He would never go out for a walk, and leave her at home with a headache. Dear Frank! it would be very unlike him to do that.

She walked thoughtfully on, considering how this was to be managed, and supposing that she should have to trust partly to chance and partly to her own cleverness to bring it about, when chance aided her in the person of Mrs. Donolly, who met her as she entered the town. After shaking hands and exchanging a few words, Mrs. Donolly asked her whether she and Frank would come in after dinner, that Mr. Donolly might show them his microscope. This was a new purchase of Mr. Donolly's, in which he was much interested. He had bought a good microscope and a number of slides, with curious insects and leaves and other things, to examine with it, and he had promised to show it to his friend Frank the first leisure afternoon he happened to have. Lettice herself had expressed a little languid and genteel curiosity to witness these wonders, and Mrs. Donolly now said she had just been going to call to invite them, when she met our heroine

returning from her walk. This was delightful. It was evident that the fates favoured Diana, and that they would assist to deliver her from the bad character supported on two wooden legs.

The invitation was therefore accepted, and the plan laid in Lettice's clever little brain of how to make it help her to her interview with the heroine of the romance at the same minute.

'How weary you look! Have you been walking far?' asked Mrs. Donolly, regarding with admiring eyes the lovely pink and white complexion, in which exercise had heightened the pink to the most brilliant rose colour.

'Only to the bridge by the river,' stammered Lettice, confused by the sudden question into giving that reply, without considering that, as she did not mean to tell her husband she had been there, it was unwise to communicate the fact to any one else. Indeed Lettice was—happily for her—no adept in deceit, and though she enjoyed the play, she was likely to make a good many mistakes if it lasted much longer; so when she reached home, and Frank, greeting her rather fretfully, asked where she had been, and why she had gone out without telling him, she forgot all about her answer to Mrs. Donolly, and avoiding a direct reply to his first question, plunged at once into her meeting with Mrs. Donolly and her invitation for the afternoon, and ended by explaining

that she had looked into the shop before she went out, and he was too busy to attend to her.

'But where did you go?' persisted he, not from really caring about where,—for why should he, thought she to herself,—but for that tiresome way men have of asking the very questions you don't want them to ask.

'Sure,' said she, 'didn't I tell you I was with Mrs. Donolly? What's the use of my speaking at all?'

'Oh, you went to see her?' said he, satisfied.

'They will be too busy with the microscope for them to talk about anything else, so he won't find out he is wrong,' thought Lettice complacently; 'and it isn't I who told him what isn't true, but he who told himself. And by and by, when it's all over and I will tell him about it, we'll have a good laugh over all I said and did.'

Thus satisfying her conscience, Lettice sat down to dinner opposite her husband, with a brilliant bloom in her pretty young cheeks, and unfortunately hungry for any one who was so soon to have a headache.

Frank talked about the microscope.

'There is nothing more interesting,' he said. 'I once looked through a very good one, and it was wonderful. I never shall forget the circulation in a frog.'

'The circulation in a frog!' interrupted his wife.

'But, my *dear* Frank, what *does* it signify how a frog circulates? Talk of gossiping about little things—what *can* be littler than them?'

'The wonders of nature are never little or uninteresting,' replied Frank, taken aback by her remark, and so assuming slightly the manner of a preacher.

'And why are frogs more natural than *we*? ' retorted his wife. 'And why are frogs' bodies more interesting than our minds? Sure when I told you things at Rostrevor, about Mrs. Plunket trying to get a husband for her daughter, and Mrs. Malony buying chickens when they were—it's only the truth I'm telling—*seven shillings* the pair of them, you looked as grave as Judge Fitzgerald himself, and says you, "I hope you don't like gossip, Lettice!" Sure it's just as much gossip about a frog's circulation, and not half as amusing either; and it's not fair upon the creatures, who can't help themselves.'

'The one thing raises the mind, and the other lowers it, that's all,' cried Frank, displaying more irritation than the circulation of a frog seemed altogether to warrant.

'Deed, then, no frog that ever circulated raised my mind,' cried his wife, getting excited also; 'and it's often I've seen them, nasty things, jumping about in slimy pools, and I think them the most inferior creatures. And what does it matter whether they circulate or not? and why will we look at

them through bits of glass that make them ever so much bigger than they are, so that it's not the real frog at all (even if the real frog *could* be interesting), but a make-believe frog? I can't bear looking at my own hand through a magnifying glass: such long hairs!—so nasty!—and I *know* I haven't got them, and nothing you shall ever say will make me believe I have, because I have *not!* I've just a nice little down on my hand; sure it's not hairy, and no microscope that ever was made shall make me believe it is, because it is *not*. It's flying in the face of Providence, that's what it is, to examine and teach about things not as they were made, but as *we* make them. Only we don't make them—we only force them to look so for a minute or two under a bit of glass; but it's not them really, and it never will be them. They are what we see them out of the glass, not in it.' Lettice spoke with the greatest volubility, and Frank, not knowing how to answer her, felt quite unreasonably angry.

'It's nonsense you're talking,' said he, 'arrant nonsense. What harm can it do? And it *is* the thing, only we're seeing it large, and so can tell what it really is'—

'Or what it really isn't,' interrupted she.

'And we find out all kinds of things—the most wonderful things in nature and'—

'Yes,' she cried with marked contempt, 'about frogs! And I wouldn't mind, no, not one bit, if there wasn't a frog at all; no, I would not.' She looked keenly at him to see how he would take this declaration, and was rather disappointed at his countenance not changing.

'And it's only gossip after all's said and done,' she reiterated; 'low gossip. And I'm more interested, for my part, in my fellow-creatures than in frogs; and in mind than in (what's that you call it?)--*matter*, isn't it? And it raises my mind more to think about how Mrs. Malony is extravagant with buying her chickens, and Mrs. Plunket match-making with her daughter, than as to how all the legs of all the frogs in the world circulate. If it is *not* lowering to think about frogs' legs, sure I don't know what *is* lowering,' and with these words Lettice rose from the table.

'There's nothing to lose your temper about, then, is there?' asked her husband, who was himself a good deal irritated.

'Deed there is, then,' she replied shortly; 'first at Rostrevor you called it gossip, and now you're saying it's arrant nonsense.'

'I suppose you won't care to go and see the microscope, then?'

'I'll tell you what it is, then, Frank,' replied she, suddenly recollecting her plans, which she had

entirely lost sight of in the heat of the discussion ;
'it's a headache I've got, and I'll go nowhere.'

'A headache, Lettice, with that colour, and after the good dinner you've eaten ?'

'It's my cheeks are burning, that's what makes them red-like ; they always do when my head aches. And as for the dinner, it isn't so much that I've eaten after all ; and if I have, I always do when my head aches. It's all debility,' she added, closing her eyes and relapsing into affectation ; 'and when the weakness is on me, I *have* to eat.'

'Well, then,' said her husband, 'I'm sorry for you, and you'd better take a book and keep quiet a bit, and I'll come for you in half an hour, which shall be time enough, maybe. Go up-stairs, dear, and the ache will go out of your head when it's quiet.'

Lettice approached him on tiptoe, and kissed his cheek with her rosy lips ; and after that she followed his advice, and ensconced herself in the most comfortable of the chairs in the drawing-room she considered so uncomfortable, with a story-book in her hand.

'How nice men are !' she said approvingly to herself ; 'they all believe anything we tell them. It would be *much* harder to have women to deal with ; but men *are* nice,' and so she read her book with as much attention as even an interesting story could command, while her mind was full of the approach-

ing interview with Diana Hope. She kept feeling the letter in her pocket to make quite sure that she had it safe, and as she withdrew her hand from feeling it, returned it again instantly, saying to herself, 'Suppose that I should find it gone!'

But the letter lay quite comfortably and securely where she had put it, waiting to do its work and bring about results she little expected.

'I wonder what she will wear to-night?' she thought. 'Hardly that holland dress again, though even from that I've got a notion about a sleeve which, if I can coax Frank to let me get myself some French cambric, I'd make a charming polonaise to wear over my white petticoats. I believe I can cut the sleeve just like that, and it's decidedly new. It's well to be a lady, and dress as you please, with more money than you know what to do with. It's the gloves and the boots that pass my patience entirely, for I never could get the same, except a pair now and then, maybe, for very best; and then they would only be imitations of such shoes and such gloves as they wear, heigho!'

Then Lettice returned to her story-book, and read happily enough till her husband came to fetch her. Here another little play had to be enacted. She assumed her most languid and affected manner, assured him that the going out before dinner in the sun must have given her a headache, and that there

was nothing would cure it except quiet ; he must make her excuses to the Donollys, and enjoy the microscope without her.

Frank stoutly declared that he could enjoy nothing without her, and at first demurred about going at all. It could be put off till another day, and he would stay and read aloud to her instead. But this she would not hear of. Read aloud for a headache!—how like a man!—no, thank him. She was very much obliged, but if he did not go to the Donolly's, it would only be he in the shop and she in the drawing-room ; and she would most likely go to sleep, and she would not have anybody in the same room with her. She would just take a nap, and sleep off her headache, and be as brisk as a bee when he came back.

Frank grumbled, as husbands who love their wives do grumble, at being obliged to go out alone. 'It seems so unnatural leaving you by yourself,' he said ruefully.

'Sure it wouldn't, if it was business that took you,' she replied very brightly considering what a headache she had, and in the argument quite forgetting to be lack-a-daisical or affected ; 'and why mind it now, then ? Or if it was the shop, why, you will be hours upon hours in the shop without me, and think no harm of it.'

'But that is so different,' remonstrated Frank.

'Then I'd rather you'd be spending your afternoon genteelly with a friend,' said Lettice, 'than behind the counter. Give me a kiss and go; there's a dear boy. It's only a microscope, and it's only a frog's leg!' and so Frank kissed her and went.





CHAPTER XIII.

THE PLOT THICKENS.

WHEN the time approached that Diana Hope might be expected, Lettice ran down into the shop with beating heart and sparkling eyes.

'Pat,' she cried, 'you may go out and take a walk. I want you to go to the Chestnuts, and—and—leave a note.'

'Shure, ma'am dear, the masher himself says I will moind the shop till he's in it; an' then I will go an' see the ould mother, who is ill, the craytur, an' wantin' me.'

'That's lucky,' cried his mistress. 'I mean that I'm very sorry your mother is ill, Pat,' she added quickly; 'but it is lucky that I can spare you at once. I'll mind the shop, and you will go to your poor mother directly.'

‘An’ thank ye koindly, ma’am. An’ it’s my mother that will be prayin’ for yez night and day, an’ maybe her prayers will do yez no harm!’ and so Pat, nothing loath, went to his mother, and Lettice sat down in the shop and waited breathlessly.

She did not wait long. Into the shop ran Miss Diana Hope, flushed, eager, expectant.

‘You good creature!’ she exclaimed when she beheld our heroine; ‘and here you are, and alone, too, bless you! Give it me, give it me! Did you ever see the beasts in the Zoo just before they are fed, or hear them, I should say?’ and she stretched out both her hands, curled up her pretty lips so as to show the white teeth within, and gave a long and quite sufficiently loud howl.

Lettice laughed, and extracting the letter from her pocket, presented it to the extended hands. Miss Diana seized it, and running into the window, first pressed the senseless thing to her lips, and then opened it. She read it eagerly, with little exclamations and bursts of laughter.

‘Oh my, my, my!’ she exclaimed when she had finished the perusal, ‘this is becoming serious. The boy raves; what shall I do? How desperate these men are!’

‘Are they?’ said Lettice simply.

Miss Diana was in deep thought, smiling, frown-

ing, and colouring all at once, biting her lips and shaking her head.

'It can be done,' she said, 'and I suppose if 'tis done 'twere better done quickly, like Banquo's murder; but I hadn't thought of it so soon. And then, money, money, money!—that horrible thing money, the want of which comes in the way of all good deeds! How is that obstacle to be conquered? Poor Dick has no money!'

'Is his name Dick?' cried Lettice eagerly. Miss Diana looked at her and laughed; she had been talking to herself, and had forgotten Lettice's presence.

'It is, no less,' she answered; 'Dick Harrington.'

'But that is not a very pretty name,' said Lettice, disappointed.

'Oh, how can you say so?' remonstrated Miss Diana. 'Dick Harrington! Dick Harrington! I think it a divine name, and so does little Doe.'

'Harrington *is* pretty.'

'And Dick is delicious! I have thought of Dick, and dreamt of Dick,—Dick, Dick, Dick,—till I believe that no four letters in all the alphabet ever entered into such a heavenly combination before.'

'It always reminds *me* of dicky-bird,' replied Lettice, upon which Miss Diana Hope beat her.

'As if the bird did not make *all* the difference,' she cried. 'But to return to business,' she added;

'what am I to do? I say, you couldn't lend me any money, could you?' Lettice blushed, and shook her head sorrowfully.

'I would with such pleasure,' she said, 'but I have none.'

'No, of course you have not,' argued Diana. 'Nobody ever has who ought, and papa *won't* let me run up bills anywhere.' Lettice thought of *her* bill at Vellacot's with a pang of self-reproach. 'How tiresome fathers are! aren't they? I wonder why there *are* any; don't you?'

Then Miss Diana read over parts of her letter again, and whistled in a very young-manly manner.

'I say,' she cried, 'that's a good thought; will you buy some things for me, and have them put down to you, and me pay you when I can? Of course, being married, you have bills?'

'Oh, I'm afraid I couldn't,' cried Lettice, astonished and frightened.

'Oh yes, you could; it's as easy as possible. You've got a bill at Vellacot's, surely; have you not, now?'

'I did buy some things the other day,' replied Lettice, 'which were not paid for.'

'Of course you did! I knew it! *Io triomphe!* Then do, there's a good creature, buy a few more in the same way, and I'll pay you ever so much sooner than you have any idea of. I will, indeed.'

'It's not the paying,' said Lettice slowly, 'but I am afraid my husband'—

'Your husband!' interrupted Diana with lively contempt; 'don't tell me that your husband is as bad as my father—don't now. Why, that's what I am going to get married for, to *have* a husband; and if he is to be that horrid! But you know it's not true. Such a pretty creature as you are, why, your husband would let you do anything you like; I'm sure he would.'

Lettice laughed and blushed.

'Frank is very kind,' she said simply.

'Of course he is. Why, what are men made for except to be kind to women? Where is the use of their being men if they're not? Now, I'll tell you what. There are a few things I *must* have before I run away, and you'll get them for me, like a good girl, won't you?'

'Run away!' cried Lettice, appalled.

'Of course. Why not? What else? That's what Dick has come for, and what all these letters are about. It is the only way in which we ever can be married, my dear, because papa cuts up rough and won't hear of it.'

'Yes, I know,' replied Lettice thoughtfully, 'and I suppose that it is the only way that you can avoid that dreadful man.'

Miss Diana burst into a merry peal of laughter.

'Well, you *are* a cool one,' she cried, 'to call my own father a dreadful man to my face!'

Lettice regarded her with astonishment.

'As if it was Mr. Hope I was speaking of! It's the man he wants you to marry, that the young gentleman told me of—the baronet with the bad character and the wooden legs.'

Then Miss Diana had to sink down on to the high stool by the counter, and to have her laugh out in comfort.

'Did he tell you that? Did he, now?' she cried in the little pauses to take breath that her laughter allowed her. 'Oh, Dick, Dick, how *very* like Dick you are!'

Lettice did not understand why it amused her so much that the fisherman should have told her about this other lover; but laughter is catching to the young and light-hearted, and so she joined, nothing loath, in the merriment.

Miss Diana wiped her eyes, for tears of laughter were running down her cheeks.

'That's the only way I ever cry,' said she; 'those are the only tears I ever mean to shed. But to business, to business. We shall be interrupted, or I shall have to go home. Listen. We mean to run away, Dick and I, and get married the first minute we can. But we want money dreadfully, and we can't do it without. He has written to a friend to

borrow fifty pounds, and as soon as it turns up, off we go. For me, I must have a few things. I can't buy myself a *trousseau*, of course—that must come after marriage ; but I must have a travelling bag, and there's such a duck of a travelling bag at Vellacot's, and for only five guineas'—

'I know,' interrupted Lettice, 'it is beautiful! I showed it to Frank, and told him I would give my eyes for it; and he said the first moment that he felt he could conscientiously afford to give me a five guinea travelling bag, he would buy *it*. But it was not much obliged to him I felt anyhow, for I know he has that sort of conscience he must be very rich indeed before it will allow him to spend five guineas that way.'

Diana Hope laughed.

'Yes, that was rather a dodgy way of putting it. However, will you buy me that bag? You've not got that sort of a conscience, I hope. I have not any conscience at all. It is too inconvenient, and one does ever so much better without it. And I want a good warm shawl, and a blue cloth travelling costume you will see hanging up on the right-hand side rather far back in the shop—a long, tight jacket, braided skirt and cape ; you can't mistake it.'

'And you will really pay me as soon as the fifty pound comes?'

'As soon as the fifty pound comes!' replied Diana,

as if the idea was new to her ; but she instantly added, 'Oh yes ; of course I will, that very minute.'

'You see, it would never do at all for my husband to find it out till I will explain it to him ; and if the bill is sent in, he will be asking me where the things are, and what could I say ?'

'You shall be paid in no time if you will only just get the things, like the dear good creature you are.'

Lettice smiled, and promised to order them in the morning when she went out marketing.

'And say they will be sent for, nothing else ; and then I'll send for them,' added the young lady, who appeared thoroughly up to every emergency.

'I say,' she suddenly exclaimed, 'you could not rob the till and give us the fifty pounds before it comes from the other chap, could you, now ?'

Lettice laughed and shook her head.

'I could not,' she replied.

'Still, it's an excellent thing to have a till that you *could* rob if you wanted money particularly bad. I wish papa kept a shop and had a till.'

'Oh, Miss Hope,' cried Lettice, falling into her affected manner, 'what an idea ! Your papa in a shop !'

'I've seen much more gentlemanly men behind a counter, though,' replied Diana coolly. 'Papa is but so-so : he's rather punchy, you know ; and they are often punchy behind counters, especially grocers ;

don't you think so? Papa would not make at all a bad grocer. Gracious, how I wish he kept a grocer's shop! Wouldn't I eat the plums and the preserved ginger! Rather!'

Lettice laughed. Then Diana Hope suddenly said it would be far better for them to go to Vellacot's at once without the least delay, and for Lettice to buy the things for her. She had just remembered that she must send for them that night, as her father was dining out, so they could be smuggled into the house without his knowing it. She got into the most violent hurry, caught up Lettice's hat and shawl which happened to be at hand, put them on for her as if she had been a child, and then sliding her hand into her arm, led her out of the shop.

I suppose my foolish heroine had never been happier in her life than she was when she found herself walking up High Street with Miss Diana Hope leaning familiarly on her arm and whispering confidentially into her ear. If only Mrs. Donolly could see her! But that was a triumph not to be hoped for, as Mrs. Donolly was doubtless at that moment obediently and patiently engaged in examining the circulation in a frog's leg.

'I am afraid Mr. Vellacot will think my buying that travelling-bag rather odd,' she remarked doubtfully.

'Say it's for a wedding present,' was the instan-

taneous rejoinder. But I am glad to say that Lettice's reply to that was :

'It would not be true.'

Diana Hope laughed.

'That would not signify much, would it?' she said roguishly. 'Besides which, it *would* be true. It's for me—for my marriage trip. Dick shall give it me if you like. It does not matter in the least whether he does or not, for all we shall have to live on afterwards must come from papa. But it shall be Dick's gift, and you shall have been commissioned to get it for him, if you please.'

Verily this young lady had an imagination as versatile as it was unscrupulous. Lettice, much truer in herself, was easily hoodwinked and misled, and half in joke, half in earnest, she admitted that this might solve the difficulty.

'Now,' Diana cried, 'we had better not go in together; I will follow you. You shall have out the bag, and I will go to the next counter and buy some riband; and then if you hear me ask for anything, and look at it and not buy it, you may be sure it is something I remember that I have forgotten, and that I can't possibly do without, and so you are to buy it for me, do you see? I shall look and not purchase, and then you will purchase instead.'

'Very well,' said Lettice; 'only, please, it's better

you didn't go beyond what you will pay out of the fifty pounds easy, or Frank may find all out, and then where are we ?'

'Not if I knows it,' answered Miss Diana Hope. 'Catch a weazel asleep !'

Lettice entered Vellacot's first, and asked to look at travelling-bags. The assortment was not large, and the only handsome one was that one at five guineas that had taken the fancy of both the girls. Lettice, feeling ashamed and uncomfortable, murmured something about a wedding present, and the young man behind the counter took up the idea at once, and expatiated on the wonderful suitability of the article in question to that purpose. Lettice purchased the bag, and then walked down the shop to where the blue cloth dress hung, which she recognised in a minute from her friend's description. At the counter next to where it was exhibited, she found Miss Diana Hope looking over pocket handkerchiefs.

'Yes, that is exactly the kind my sister wants,' she said rather loudly as Lettice approached ; 'those in the box with the embroidered corners, at two guineas a dozen. I will tell her about them, and she will call to see them, I'm sure.'

Lettice bought the dress for seventy-four shillings, Mr. Vellacot's young man, beyond a doubt, thinking that the bookseller's pretty wife was very extra-

vagant. Then she looked at shawls, but felt uneasy, as she did not know which shawl it was that Miss Diana Hope wished her to buy. Suddenly, while she was doubtfully regarding them, that young lady at the next counter said in a loud, sharp voice : ' Let me see some Berlin wools, white for the centre, and red and blue for the border of some work I am doing. White for the centre, and red and blue for the border,' she repeated, yet more loudly and sharply.

' And am I to buy her these wools also ?' thought Lettice, astonished ; ' and has she not even a few pence for them ?'

She returned to her anxious survey of the shawls, and as she did so, Miss Diana again repeated : ' White for the centre, and red and blue for the border.' And while the words, so often and so loudly uttered, sounded still in Lettice's ears, it occurred to her that one of the shawls that lay on the counter before her answered exactly to that description ; it was, in fact, a white shawl with a deep border of mingled red and blue. She could not help giving a little laugh as she desired the shopman to put that shawl up for her ; and then, having purchased one of the boxes of two-guinea handkerchiefs, she begged that the parcel might be done up at once, ' and I will send for it,' she added rather faintly.

It was a little hard upon Lettice, that in order to play out her game properly, Miss Diana, who seemed really to enjoy the play, took no notice of her in the shop. She would have greatly liked the intimate terms they were on to be seen there as everywhere else; and it was trying, that to all appearances they did not know each other at all. However, she admitted that this prudence was necessary, and that the real intimacy was worth more than the appearance; and she accordingly left the shop without taking any notice of the young lady, who was still turning over wools, and walked quickly homewards, wondering what the next chapter in this very interesting romance would be. She had not reached the end of the street, however, before its heroine overtook her.

‘Capital girl! how you managed!’ she cried. ‘How can I ever thank you enough?’

‘And if he comes for an answer, Miss Hope, what will I say to him?’

‘Ah, what will you say? Say “yes”!’

‘I am just to say “yes” to him?’

‘Yes, my dear, you are just to say “yes” to him. Oh, it is desperate—desperate work, but it must—must be.’

‘And I will say it with all the pleasure in life,’ cried Lettice. ‘Sure “yes” makes everybody happy. I hate myself having “no” said to me; don’t you, then?’

'He must never say "no" to me, at any rate. This "yes" ought to purchase me an exemption from "noes" for the rest of my life. Oh, I have stayed too late! I must run for it, or the servants will talk, and there will be no end of a row when the master comes home. Good-bye, good-bye, you kind thing! I shall never forget what you've done for me, never.'

'Sure I've been delighted to do it.'

'And you may expect to see me at any moment, and must not be surprised at anything I ask you.'

A thrill of excitement ran all over Lettice at such words, calling up a number of vague ideas. Miss Diana tripped gaily away, but in a moment tripped as gaily back again.

'I suppose you really could *not* rob the till for me?' she said.

'I could not,' replied Lettice, laughing, and so they parted.

But when Lettice entered the shop, which she had so thoughtlessly left empty, she found her husband there, and more angry with her than she had ever yet seen him.

'What is the meaning of this?' he cried roughly. 'Why did you send Pat away, and then leave the shop yourself?'

'His mother was ill,' cried Lettice, frightened.

'And I had given him leave to go later. And if

you took upon you to change my orders,—which you had no right to do,—why didn't you stay at home yourself? You make me go to the Donolly's without you, because your head aches; then you send my shop-boy away; and then you go gadding about the country yourself, and leave no one to attend to the shop. I never heard of such behaviour. You are enough to ruin a man; you are enough to provoke a saint!

'I did not mean any harm,' cried Lettice, struggling with tears, half fear, half anger.

'Oh, you did not mean any harm!' repeated her husband with fine disdain. 'For my part, I wonder whether you ever do mean anything. Where did you go?'

'You speak so loud you frighten me.'

'Where did you go?' Lettice burst into tears, and sobbed instead of speaking.

'Now, Lettice, this is too bad. You just cry because you know I can't bear to see your tears, and you think I shall leave you alone.'

'I do not, but — because — you — frighten me,' sobbed Lettice.

Her husband tried to recover his temper.

'I don't want to frighten you,' he said, 'but you must see I have a right to be vexed. I don't choose you to serve in the shop, and'—

'I didn't; I went out,' still sobbing.

'But why did you send Pat away, then?'

'His mother—mother was ill.'

'And why did you go out?'

'I thought it might do my head good. Oh, Frank, you don't love me one bit.'

'I do, Lettice; you know I do.'

Lettice wept so bitterly that the tables began to turn. Frank experienced the feelings of the guilty person, and found himself assuming the *rôle* of comforter.

By slow degrees, Lettice permitted herself to be consoled, and to be persuaded to take less utterly desponding views of life in general, and Frank's feelings towards her in particular. She even graciously confessed that she had been thoughtless in sending Pat out, or in not remaining at home herself if she did so; and putting up her pretty lips to be kissed, entreated her husband not to be angry with her, or to frighten her so dreadfully, for she did not mean any harm. Frank kissed the pretty lips, and begged her pardon, which Lettice very kindly and gently conceded. He then tenderly hoped that her head was better, but Lettice's head was really aching now. Happy young head! it was unaccustomed to tears, and crying had made it ache. So no more questions were asked, and no more fault was found by Frank; the only thing of any consequence was that his dear Lettice's head should cease aching,

and he called himself a brute for making it worse by frightening her till she cried.

‘Men *are* brutes, dear,’ she replied meekly ; ‘my aunt often said so. I believe my uncle was a great brute.’

Frank said he would call Pat to mind the shop, and come up-stairs with her, and do just whatever she liked.

‘What is that piece of paper peeping from out of your waistcoat pocket?’ asked Lettice.

‘This?’ said he, taking it out. ‘It’s well you reminded me. It is a cheque for fifty pounds Mr. Hope gave me just now as his subscription to the hospital, of which they have made me treasurer. I’ll put it in the till at once, as the safest place to keep it,’ and after doing this, and replacing the key of the till in the pocket from which he had taken it, Mr. Tippington accompanied his wife up-stairs, and treated her with the greatest affection.





CHAPTER XIV.

THE CRISIS.

BUT a great change came over the little family at the bookseller's shop before nightfall. A telegram came to Frank from his mother. His father was ill, and his mother begged him to go to her at once.

It was very hard for the pair of married lovers to separate at all, but the distance was not far. The mail car started in half an hour; a train could be caught for the best part of the journey; Frank would arrive at the farm at ten o'clock, and promised without fail to be back by dinner-time next day.

Lettice put what he required hastily into a little bag, thinking of Miss Diana Hope's travelling-bag as she did so. He changed his coat for a warmer one, and would have taken leave of her in the house, but she insisted on accompanying him to the inn from which the car started.

All was haste, hurry, and confusion ; for Frank's clothes were not kept in the order that a good wife should keep her husband's clothes in, and hardly anything could be found that was wanted. At last, however, they left the house arm-in-arm, and Lettice saw her Frank trotted off on the mail car, waving her handkerchief after him, and with tears ready to fall out of her beautiful eyes.

She walked home alone. 'I only hope Miss Hope may be as happy as I am, though I did marry a shop,' she thought, 'and *didn't* run away. Fancy having to run away to be married! It is a dreadfully delightful sort of thing to do.'

When she arrived at the private door of her house, she was startled to see the fisherman loitering on the threshold of the shop. She turned back, and passing him, entered that way.

'Now, Pat, you may go and have your tea.'

'I've had my tea, mistress.'

'Then you may go and have your supper.'

Pat grinned from ear to ear.

'That's my tea, mistress,' he said ; 'supper and tea in one.'

She sat down at her husband's desk defeated, and the fisherman entering the shop, addressed the boy and asked him for *The Physiology of the Human Mind*.

Pat stared, and grinned, and looked at the book

shelves above his head, which head he then rubbed after the custom of his country when puzzled.

‘Shure the master’s gone for the night,’ he said, ‘and he won’t be back till dinner to-morrow or afther. And it’s myself would be proud to get it for yer ; but maybe he will like to do it, an’ we will just let him.’

Then Lettice glided forward.

‘Perhaps,’ she said doubtfully, ‘I could get what you want?’

The fisherman bowed politely.

‘Have you got *The Physiology of the Human Mind?*’

‘I don’t know,’ she replied, looking steadily at him, and then blushing and dropping her eyes when his steady look in return embarrassed her ; and she added in a hesitating manner, ‘We have a good many books ; is there any other you want?’

‘How am I ever to say “yes” to him in a manner he will understand?’ thought she. ‘Oh, that horrid boy! why has he had his supper?’

‘Have you got *The Course of True Love never did run smooth?*’ he asked.

‘Yes,’ she answered with emphasis, hoping and wondering if he would know what she meant ; but it was quite evident that he did not. He had put the question jokingly and at random, and was not particularly attending to her reply, nor suspecting it of conveying a hidden meaning.

Then Lettice looked up at the books, angry with herself for not being able to make him comprehend her.

'Miss Diana Hope could do it at once,' she thought discontentedly; 'it is a fine thing to have education and be a real lady. Any one can see the difference by the quickness of them, if by nothing else.' Then her eye fell on the name of a book that gave her a sudden hope of being able to convey the answer she was to give to his mind. It was a story called *No and Yes*.

She took it down and put it before him.

'Do you know this?' she asked in a hesitating way.

He turned the pages over, looked at her, and seemed to catch light, and to be aware that there was more in what she was doing than met the eye.

'Have you got any book about delivering letters?' he asked languidly.

'I have, somewhere.'

'Does it say whether they *were* delivered?'

'It does; they were.'

'And they were answered, I suppose?'

'Yes.'

'Surely he will understand now,' she thought; but he did not. He did not take the "yes" as a reply to his letter, merely to his question. His eyes shone, for he saw she had an answer for him. It was a letter he expected, however, not a single word.

Lettice felt almost in despair when she was convinced by his face that though excited he was unlightened, and more than ever wished herself a lady with an education.

'That book I showed you,' she said, laying her hand on the volume, 'is a very nice one. I am sure you will like it. It answers many things. Books do, you know'—

'Oh, it answers things, does it?' he cried, and he took hold of it and shook it, but nothing falling out, he looked blankly at Lettice.

'Sure, the very name is an answer to almost any question we can ask, isn't it then?' she said with vivacity.

Again he looked at her.

'Yes and No,' he read from the back of the volume.

"No and Yes," "Yes and No;" to be sure they are two very important little words, and they answer every question, as you say.'

'And letters they answer too, don't they? One or other of them maybe will answer any letter.'

His face fell.

'I suppose it's "No,"' he said gloomily; 'I expected no less.'

'The name of the book is "*Yes* and No,"' said Lettice with a great emphasis on the 'Yes,' and skimming over the 'No' very much indeed.

His face brightened up all over, and he gave a low prolonged whistle, and again took up the volume and examined the back attentively.

'So it is, I declare,' he exclaimed; 'I had not noticed it. And I suppose it might just as well be "Yes" by itself.'

'Yes,' cried Lettice, and the word left her lips clear and bright like the sound of a bell.

'Well,' said the fisherman, looking almost appalled, 'that *is* an answer—I mean a name for a book. I'll take it, of course,' and he put the book into his pocket; but he did not put the money in exchange for it on the counter, and Lettice remembered with a droll sort of little pang that poor Dick had no money.

'Poor Dick! it *does* sound like a bird, whatever Miss Hope may say about the *y* making all the difference,' she thought.

'I say,' said the fisherman suddenly, 'Hope told a flattering tale,' and he laughed heartily. 'Do you happen to know where old Hope takes his dinner this blessed evening?'

'At Glenkeel House,' replied Lettice, for Miss Diana had happened to mention the name.

'And he sleeps there?'

'He does!'

'Look out for squalls!' said the fisherman, and turning abruptly away, he walked out of the shop.

'How quare he is!' said Pat; 'an' with naither with your lave nor by your lave he takes up his book an' he walks off, an' not a penny left for it, if you plase.'

'I suppose he has a bill here,' said Lettice rather faintly.

Then she left the shop and went up into the drawing-room, where she found the evening long and lonely without Frank.

'Look out for squalls!' What had the fisherman meant when he had said that? and what sort of squalls was she to look out for? Coupled with Miss Hope's parting words that had so thrilled her with expectation and wonder, it seemed as if the crisis of the romance was nigh at hand. But even if it was, what had she to do with it? Why should Miss Hope arrive suddenly and ask her some strange things? and above all, why should *she* look out for squalls? Alas! her part in the affair was over now. She could do no more. There was nothing left now but for the couple to run away, and they certainly would not want her to run away with them. Life would seem a little tame and dull when they were gone, though the romance had been to her fraught with difficulties and dangers. Still dangers and difficulties are *not* disagreeable things to the young and excitable, and Lettice felt that life would be dull without them.

She went to bed wondering what the morrow

would bring forth, and little thinking that the night itself was to decide everything, and be full of greater excitement than any she had tasted yet.

The evening had been so dull all alone, that Lettice retired to rest earlier than usual. She was sound asleep, and dreaming, as a young wife separated from her husband is bound to do, of her absent Frank, when *something* awoke her. She had no idea what the sound was, but she felt certain that she had been awakened by some unusual sound, so certain that she sat up in her bed and listened.

After a minute she heard it again, and now she could not doubt what it was. It was a pebble thrown against her window.

Then Lettice jumped out of bed, not frightened, but pleased. Of course it was Frank returned unexpectedly. His father was better, he could not stay away from her, and had flown back on the wings of love. She thrust her feet into slippers, hastily put on some of her clothes, and wrapping herself up in a dressing-gown, ran down-stairs to the door of the shop, and opening it, found herself face to face, not with Frank, but with Miss Diana Hope.

She started, screaming in her astonishment, and found herself gagged and her scream driven back to her with Diana's hand placed forcibly over her mouth. Lettice had never doubted for an in-

stant that it was Frank returned unexpectedly, and so had not even looked out of her window to make sure; and she had gone to the shop door instead of the door of the house, as through the shop was the shortest way to her bedroom.

Miss Hope, her hand still on Lettice's mouth, walked into the shop, making its mistress back in before her.

'Hush, hush, hush!' was all she said.

She looked white and agitated. Lettice had never seen her like this before, and stood quite still and frightened, just looking at her.

Then Diana Hope wrung her hands and cried in low and impassioned voice, 'We are undone—utterly undone! We are ruined, unless you will help us.'

'You know I will if I can,' said Lettice, feeling as if she was still dreaming.

'You can if you will, and I know you will—I know it; you never can be cruel!'

'Only tell me.'

'We are discovered—we are undone—we are ruined! Dick will be arrested—we must get off to-night—and we have not a farthing.'

She wrung her hands again, and big tears rolled out of her eyes over her white cheeks. Lettice had never imagined that Diana Hope could look like this.

‘What can I do?’ cried she, full of sympathy and compassion. ‘Oh, how I wish I had’—

They both spoke as if a farthing was all that was required to set everything right.

‘You have—you can save us—borrow some money from the till.’

‘But I am afraid there is very little there.’

‘Papa gave your husband a cheque for fifty pounds yesterday.’

‘He did.’

‘Where is it?’

‘Sure it is in the till. I forgot altogether.’

‘He lavishes his fifties and his hundreds on hospitals, and leaves his child deserted and miserable. Is it not atrocious?’

Lettice reflected for a moment, and then replied with conviction, ‘It *is* atrocious.’

‘He is my own father; the money is as much mine as his; it will save us from utter ruin and eternal misery. Will you give it to me?’

‘But the till is locked!’

‘Oh, has he taken the key with him?—has he taken the key with him?’ wailed Diana. ‘Then it is all over! I never thought of that.’

‘He has not,’ cried Lettice with sudden recollection. ‘It is in his coat pocket.’

‘Oh, the dear!’ exclaimed Diana Hope; ‘how like a man! They certainly *are* the nicest creatures to

deal with. Get it, get it, and give me the money—my own money! It is really mine. What right has he to spend all he has on any and everybody, except his own miserable daughter? Get it me; oh, do!’

‘But what will Frank say?’

‘Never mind what Frank says. It will only be for a few hours, very likely only for a few minutes. I will send you that fifty pounds of Dick’s I told you about the very instant it arrives; but this sudden ruin forbids us to wait for it.’

Lettice never thought of asking what the sudden ruin was.

‘You really will?’ she said.

‘I promise it solemnly,’ replied Diana Hope with a manner as solemn as her words.

Without a syllable Lettice ran up-stairs and took the key of the till out of Frank’s pocket. She came back swiftly and noiselessly, and still without a syllable unlocked the till, and handed the paper Frank had placed there the evening before to Miss Diana.

That young lady accepted it with one hand, and with the other made a clutch at the gold and silver in the till.

‘May I?’ she asked pleadingly. ‘It never occurred to me that we had no small change, and that we can’t cash the cheque till to-morrow. May I?’

‘Oh yes, you may,’ cried Lettice recklessly. She

felt she might well reverse the proverb, 'In for a penny in for a pound,' and that as she was already 'in' for fifty pounds, a few shillings or even sovereigns more made little difference.

'You are sure I shall have it back to-morrow,—the fifty pounds, I mean,—for Frank returns to dinner?' she said anxiously.

'As sure as that I am a living woman. Oh, how can Dick and I ever thank you enough, or love you enough? You have saved us from despair and utter misery, you dear, good, wonderful guardian angel, just sent here to make us happy!' Diana Hope clasped Lettice round the neck as she spoke, and covered her face with kisses.

Lettice felt exalted, heroic, and glad. She returned the kisses with interest.

'If only you are happy,' she cried with a sort of triumph, 'I care for nothing else.'

'I have not a moment! The loss of a second of time may be utter ruin!—annihilation, or a thousand times worse!—a despair that would make annihilation sweet! Dear, dear creature, good-bye!' Another kiss, a warm pressure of both hands, and Miss Diana Hope was gone.

Lettice remained alone in the shop quite bewildered. It seemed impossible that anything had happened like this. Diana Hope could not have flung pebbles at her window; could not have stood

here in the middle of the night ; could not have this moment left her with the fifty-pound cheque in her hand. It could not be, and yet it had been. What a wonderful thing life was! how full it was of unexpected and extraordinary events!

What could have happened to drive the two lovers to destruction, and compel them to take this imprudent, this desperate step? Diana had spoken of discovery, of ruin, of Dick being arrested. What could any one arrest Dick for? Surely a man could not be arrested for intending to run away with a girl, if the girl was willing to be run away with? Lettice did not understand law, and felt puzzled. And where had Dick been while Miss Hope was with her? and where would they be married? Oh, how very interesting it was! how much more interesting than anything that had ever happened to Lettice, except her own courtship and marriage! Would Frank have been willing to run away with her if any difficulties had been put in his way, instead of their path to matrimony having been, as it was, all smooth, easy, and strewn with flowers? She hoped he would. It seemed such a spirited, manly thing to do. A woman would adore the man who was anxious and willing to run away with her. But she? Could she have behaved as Miss Diana was doing? Could she have made plans, surmounted difficulties, and been just as desirous to

run away with her lover as he with her? Lettice acknowledged to herself, with blushes and shame, that she could not. While admiring Diana's spirit beyond anything, she knew that she could never have emulated it. She recalled the days of her courtship, and remembered how shy she had been; how seldom she had met Frank half way; how glad she had often felt of her aunt's support; how difficult it would have been to her to be happy in marrying without it. And yet her heart told her that it was impossible for Diana to love Dick more than she had loved Frank. She knew that a glory and a light had come to her life with his love which it had never had before, and could never be without again. Even there, alone as she was in the night, it was with blushes, smiles, and even sweet happy tears that she realized how much this love was to her, and how barren earth would be without it.

At last, Lettice went up-stairs to her bed, where she lay, excited and thoughtful, for what seemed to her a long time, before she slept.

She woke later with a great start, and with an idea that she was waked by a stone being thrown at her window; but when she jumped out of bed and ran there to see, she found that her brain was only reproducing the impressions that had been so deeply made on it during the night. There was no one to be seen, and the sun was pouring his fresh

morning light cheerfully down into the street—as cheerfully as if he was shining on soft grasses, and moss-green trees, and brightly-tinted flowers.

In a moment Lettice remembered all the wonderful things that had happened. But *had* they happened, or were they dreams? Oh no, they were not dreams; they were very real events. Where was Diana Hope now? where was Dick Harrington? Together, of course. And was she no longer Diana Hope, but Mrs. Richard Harrington? How strange, how charming, how sweet it had sounded to Lettice when, at her wedding breakfast, her friends had jestingly accosted her as Mrs. Frank Tippington? Poor Diana Hope would have no friends to jest tenderly with her after this fashion; she would have no wedding breakfast, no bridesmaids, no cake. At these ideas Lettice felt quite appalled, and began to wonder whether it would be any wedding at all.

‘I am quite sure I should not have felt as if I was married,’ she said to herself.

In the romance and interest attending on the hero and heroine of the adventure, Lettice lost sight of any selfish fears or thoughts about herself. She scarcely remembered the fifty-pound note. Diana would assuredly send it to her before Frank discovered that it was gone, and she would put it into the till, and no one ever be one bit the wiser. Of

course, she should tell Frank all about it by and by, when her friend had relieved her from her solemn promise of secrecy. The best part of everything, after all, was the telling Frank. She might be a little frightened at first, because perhaps he would think she ought not to have taken the note even for such a purpose, and even when it would be returned so soon ; but she did not suppose he would think about this *much*, and she should soon coax him out of thinking about it at all.

Lettice took her solitary breakfast, wondering how soon the news of Diana Hope's elopement would be spread through the place, and from whom she should first hear it ; probably from Kitty, to whom it would come through Pat when the first customers had visited the shop. But when Kitty entered the room to announce Mrs. Donolly, she did not for a moment doubt that the time had arrived that all her self-command and readiness would be called into play, and that Mrs. Donolly was paying her a visit at this early hour for the sake of communicating a very startling piece of scandal. She remembered how very many morning visits her aunt and her aunt's friends had made for similar purposes.

She laid aside the sock she had true wifely pleasure in darning for Frank during his absence, and, opening an album, hastily began turning over

the leaves, for she thought it was a very genteel thing to be found looking at a book of pictures so early in the day.

‘Just as if I had nothing whatever to do, like a real lady,’ said Lettice.





CHAPTER XV.

'I AM RUINED.'

I AM an early visitor ; not too early, I hope ?' said Mrs. Donolly. 'I came to inquire after your headache.'

'Thanks,' drawled Lettice with a fine-lady air of patronage ; 'I am always glad to see you, you know.' She thought she had a right to be patronizing. Was she not the confidential chosen friend of the girl whose father bought his common sherry of this woman's husband ?

'And I hope your headache *is* better ?'

'Oh, it was nothing ; one is not always inclined to go out, you know.'

Mrs. Donolly winced a little at that, and said she hoped Mr. Tippington had told her how much pleased he had been with what he saw in the microscope.

'Anything but frogs?' drawled Lettice, closing her eyes, as if doing so helped the words to drop out of her mouth.

'Oh yes, plenty of other things,' was the good-humoured answer. 'I hope we shall convert you to the wonders of the microscope some day, by showing them to you. Now, I am sure Mr. Tippington told you a great deal; he was quite excited.'

'Thanks. How good of you! But I did not hear a word from Frank; and he is gone away. He was obliged to leave me; he had a telegram; his father is ill.'

'His father! Oh, I am so sorry! The good old man! How grieved Brian will be!'

'Frank said he would be back to dinner. I do hope his father will recover: death is so shocking; and I can't *think* what I will do if Frank is unhappy.'

'You would be his best consoler,' replied Mrs. Donolly, smiling kindly at her.

'I never consoled any one. I never was with any one at all who wanted it. I'm thinking that I will not know one little bit what to do or say.'

Lettice was natural now, for she was interested, as she always was about anything that concerned her husband.

'It's easy,' said Mrs. Donolly; 'it's just thinking only of him, and not of yourself at all.'

'Is it?' cried Lettice, surprised.

'It is; and so you'll find you're doing it and you not knowing.'

'It may be so,' said Lettice; 'but it's not easy, anyway, not to be thinking of yourself at all.'

'You would find it so when your husband wanted comfort,' replied the other again, smiling at her very kindly.

Lettice's eyes met hers, and a sweet responsive smile broke over her fair young face.

'I'm not good enough for him at all,' she said, 'but sometimes I think I will be. It is to give up my own fancies for his. We do not always think alike, you know, Mrs. Donolly; and now he is away from me, I'm sorry for it.'

'You will think more and more like him,' replied Mrs. Donolly with gentle eagerness. 'He is so good and sensible. My husband has such a high opinion of him; he is so steady, and was so well brought up. His mother'—

'Oh, mercy, Mrs. Donolly,' was the reply as Lettice relapsed into her affectation; 'don't bring his mother over me, if you please. I'm tired of her entirely. Sure it's the married men have no right to have mothers, I'm thinking.'

'I wonder what his mother will do if it pleases God to take her husband?' replied Mrs. Donolly gravely. 'She would be too lonely at the farm. When old Mr. Tippington was so ill before, Frank

told Brian he always meant to give her a home if his father died. You know the old gentleman has been in a precarious state for so long, they *had* to think about it.'

Lettice actually screamed.

'Give her a home!—here!' she cried; 'that dreadful strict old woman! Oh, that will be too unkind and cruel! It's not Frank will do it; I will not be frightened.'

Mrs. Donolly looked at her quite pained, and the kindly expression with which she had regarded her till now faded out of her face.

'She is one of the best women and mothers I know,' she said gravely. 'However, it is no business of mine, Mrs. Tippington; but your husband loves her dearly.'

Lettice bit her lips and said no more. She could not believe that Frank would inflict his mother on her, and break up the *tête-à-tête* life which surely had as great a charm for him as for her. And to have a strict old woman living for ever over the shop with her, shocked at everything she did or said! She would much sooner die. Frank could not and should not do it. However, old Mr. Tippington was alive yet, and she devoutly hoped he might live to be a hundred years old. Then her thoughts suddenly returned to Diana Hope and the adventures of the night before. Had she not run away, after

all? How was it that Mrs. Donolly was not open-mouthed about it?

'Is there any news this morning?' she asked with a well-assumed air of languid indifference.

'News?' replied the other, surprised at the sudden question. 'Do you mean politics?'

'Politics!' echoed Lettice with an affected laugh, and believing herself very genteel in quoting Miss Diana Hope. 'Not if I knows it! I hope I've not come to politics yet. Any news in Clanmena, Mrs. Donolly?'

'None that I am aware of, except that the butchers promise us meat a halfpenny a pound cheaper next week.'

'My! is that all? And is that to be called news, I wonder? Now at Rostrevor there was always news to be had for the asking—somebody dead, or born, or married, or run away,' and as she uttered the last two words she looked keenly at her companion, but that lady was evidently unaware that there was any particular meaning attached to them.

'Strange,' thought Lettice; 'she can't have given it up, and she can't have run away last night and it not be known all over Clanmena by this time. What is the meaning of it at all?'

'We are to have a committee of the Dorcas tomorrow. I hope we may consider you as a member of the society?' said Mrs. Donolly.

'I can't say ; I have not thought about it.'

'I think you would like it.'

'Well, I suppose you may. One is not bound to attend very regularly, I suppose?'

'You will get interested in it and like to attend.'

'Will I?' and Lettice yawned.

Mrs. Donolly took the hint and rose to leave her, not feeling as if her visit had been much of a success.

'I shall be anxious to hear how the old gentleman is, and will send to inquire in the evening,' she said pleasantly.

'You are very good,' was the reply, as Lettice rose with alacrity to speed the parting guest.

'I am almost afraid that Brian was right about her, and that there will be nothing to get *on with* in her.' Then she smiled and shook her head at herself. 'Take care,' she said ; 'is it not only that *you* don't get on with her? Is it not only that she does not happen to like you? And does that make any difference in what her character is? Does that change the true love for her husband on which you founded all your hopes for her? Self-love *does* make us very unjust.'

So, judging herself, not Lettice, Mary Donolly went home to teach and pet her child and attend to her household affairs.

The day was a long and heavy one to Lettice, very difficult to get through. At last, when she

saw her husband coming up the street, she could hardly believe that she really did so, though she had been watching for more than an hour only to see him come walking up the street, and had been every moment disappointed because she did not do so. She flew down the stairs, and flung herself into his arms as he entered the house, and, when clasped to his heart, each enjoyed a moment of intense bliss.

'Oh, Frank,' she cried, 'you shall never leave me again!'

'My darling!' was his sole reply.

Hand in hand they went up-stairs, so happy to be together that they thought of nothing else. At last Lettice-remembered why he had left her.

'And how is your father?' she asked.

'He is better. He rallied while I was there; he is not in danger now. They were so glad to see me, and my mother wants you to go and help her; but I can't spare you, darling,' and he drew her fondly towards him.

'Sure I won't go, then,' she cried stoutly. 'I can't spare myself either.'

'And what have you been doing with yourself while I was away?'

Lettice blushed as the recollection of what she *had* been doing, quite forgotten in the pleasure of seeing her husband, returned to her; and she

thought how glad she would be when she could tell him everything.

‘Not much, indeed,’ she replied evasively. ‘Mrs. Donolly was here this morning, and maybe I spent the rest of the time watching for you.’

They sat down to dinner, and while they were yet at table, a message came from Mr. Hope requesting that Mr. Tippington would step up to the Castle at his earliest convenience. Lettice gave a great start, and her cheeks burned furiously at the message. What *could* have happened to make Diana’s father send for her husband? Was it possible that he had in any way discovered that she was his daughter’s confidant, and having discovered her elopement, meant to question Frank about it? At first the idea frightened her; but then she laughed privately as she reflected how entirely Frank, in his ignorance and simplicity, would play her game for her, how he would deny her having heard a word of or done a thing in the matter, and by telling a number of unconscious lies, might save her the embarrassing necessity of telling any conscious ones.

With these thoughts she quite enjoyed the idea of the impending interview between the two men, and made her husband hurry his dinner, that he might not keep the old gentleman waiting.

And if you see Miss Diana Hope, Frank,’ she

said artfully, 'you might be asking her when the next singing practice is to be.'

'Miss Diana,' she thought to herself; 'probably Miss no longer, but Mrs. Dick Harrington. Was he christened Dick, I wonder? or is she Mrs. Richard Harrington? Will Frank ever have finished his rice pudding? If he only knew my impatience for the news, he would not be so slow. It is a wonder why men are always slow when one wants them to be quick, and quick when one wants them to be slow. Men are made for the aggravation of women.'

In her restless excitement of expectation, she could not stay quietly in the house, but put on her hat to walk part of the way with her husband. He would not let her go to the Castle and wait about in the grounds, as she wished to do, as he said it would be an intrusion; so they parted at the gates, when he charged her to go back at once, and he would follow as quickly as he could.

'I can't imagine what Mr. Hope will want with me,' he said; 'he never sends for me when he is ordering books or paper. He writes an order maybe, or he comes to the shop; and sometimes I take him up books to choose, but he never sent for me like this.'

'No, my dear,' thought Lettice; 'and never had such reason.'

She tripped gaily back when her husband had left her.

'It would have been nicer,' she thought, 'if he had let me go in, and went about near the Castle, and perhaps little Doe might have run out and told me all that had happened; but Frank is so very particular, and so afraid of our stepping out of our places and making too free with the gentry.

'Too free, indeed! It is little he thinks how Diana Hope was here in the middle of the night, and how I am her friend and confidant, and how she took me in her arms and kissed me, as if she had known me all her life. There will be no being "too free" with Mrs. Dick Harrington after all I have done for her. It is dear friends we shall be for the rest of our lives at any rate. Perhaps she and her poor Dick,—oh, how glad I am Frank's name is not Dick: if it was, I would *never* call him poor; but Miss Hope cares for nothing, she only thinks of fun,—and perhaps she and her husband will ask us to go and stay with them one of these fine days. I don't suppose Mr. Hope would invite us to meet them at the Castle;' but maybe she will have a home of her own before long, and I think I'll be one of the first friends she asks into it!

Lettice laughed as these thoughts flashed through her gay young brain; and she felt so full of joy and youth, that she could have danced through the streets that led her home.

She grew a little graver as she remembered that

she had to tell her husband the whole story. Not that she was much afraid as to how he would take it when he really understood what had happened, and from how dreadful a fate she had saved Diana Hope. But at first, perhaps, he might blame her a little, and think she had better not have interfered.

'It would so often save embarrassment if one could tell the last part of a story first,' she thought; 'at any rate, I'll begin with Mr. Hope's horrible plans for his daughter, so that Frank may see I only did my duty when I prevented them.'

Frank returned home sooner than his wife expected him. Certainly, if sent for about the elopement, Mr. Hope had not found much to say to him on the subject. Poor, innocent, ignorant Frank had denied everything, doubtless, assured Diana's father that Lettice knew nothing about it and could have had no hand in it whatever. She laughed softly at the idea of this, when she reflected that she, and she alone, had provided both funds and clothes for the little excursion, and that without her it never could have taken place at all.

How amazed Mr. Hope would be, could he guess that it was his own fifty pound note that had enabled his daughter to run away!

'Well?' she cried eagerly as her husband entered the drawing-room over the shop, where she patiently, or rather impatiently, awaited him.

'Well?' he replied, smiling. 'Sure it was nothing of interest to us, only a queer sort of a mistake Mr. Hope had made—queer enough for such a man of business as he is,' he added with a little laugh.

Lettice hardly took in the meaning of the words. 'And Miss Diana?' she said.

'Miss Diana; what about her?'

'Did you see her?' As she asked the question, Lettice gave a little laugh not unlike the one Frank had indulged in just before.

'See her, did I? How could I, when she's not there?'

'She isn't there? Oh, Frank, tell me.'

Frank looked at her in mild surprise.

'And what is there to tell? It's to her aunt she's gone. Her aunt was taken ill last night while Mr. Hope was out at a dinner, and Miss Diana was sent for, and she had to go, and another little Miss Hope asked me to tell you that there will be no practising till she is back.'

'Little Doe. You saw little Doe?'

'And who is little Doe, Lettice dear?'

'Oh,' she cried impatiently, 'it is the name the youngest Miss Hope goes by.'

'I would not call her by it, then, if I was you, though her sister may.'

'What will it signify what I call her? She sent me that message?'

'She did.'

'Are those the very words, Frank dear?'

'How can I tell? Is it the words that matter? It is the meaning I'm giving you, any way.'

'Very well,' said Lettice; 'you are sure, then, she said nothing more?'

'Not a word that I can remember, good, bad, or indifferent.'

Then Frank left her, and went down into the shop, which was closed for the night. He remained for some minutes, after which he called her loudly from the foot of the stairs. She was thinking earnestly over what he had told her, and endeavouring to make the truth out of the message he had received.

Diana pretended she had received a summons to her aunt during her father's absence, and little Doe had been left to tell her father the story—yes, the story in two senses of the word, for it was a lie that the elder sister had instructed the child to repeat to their father. Lettice shrank a little as this idea came forcibly before her, and then consoled herself by thinking that the father had brought it entirely on himself by worldliness, want of principle, and tyranny. The lie, if fault it was, was his fault—not Diana's or little Doe's. It was told to save his daughter from being married to a man who had certainly one wooden leg—perhaps two—and no

character. Were not Diana and little Doe justified in doing anything under such very trying, such very unusual circumstances? She was roused from these reflections by hearing her husband call her, and jumping up, she ran hastily down to him. He was standing in the shop before the open till, a candle in one hand, while with the other he kept rummaging over its contents. He stopped doing this when she came to him, and, lifting up a scared, somewhat pale face, looked blankly at her.

‘Lettice,’ he cried, ‘am I mad or dreaming? Do you remember the paper sticking out of my waistcoat pocket?’

‘I do, Frank.’

‘And was it here that I put it, then?’

‘Did you? I think you did. I might not notice in particular,’ replied the wife, faltering a little.

‘I did put it there, and it’s gone; it’s not here now, nowhere,’ and he rummaged the drawer again in a helpless, violent sort of way. ‘My God, Lettice, what am I to do?’

Lettice was amazed to hear such an exclamation from her husband’s lips—he who was so very particular, so very reverent in his language always.

‘But what does it matter?’ she asked.

‘Matter!’ cried he. ‘Didn’t I tell you? Do you forget everything? It was Mr. Hope’s subscription to the hospital, trusted to me—*trusted*, you know,

Lettice, as treasurer. Sure I told you ; you can't forget ?'

'I remember, now you speak of it. You can't have lost it, Frank dear ; you must have put it in some other place.'

'I did not ; I put it here. Lettice, I am a ruined man !' He looked so white, and his eyes shone so, that Lettice felt terrified and gave a little scream.

'It will come back,' she cried on the impulse of the moment ; and then correcting herself, she added, 'I mean that it can't be lost ; but even if it was, dear, it's not so bad. You can make it up. Nobody will ask a word or be a bit the wiser. You will not be wanting it till the end of the year, and you shall save fifty pounds easy by that time.'

'Fifty pounds, Lettice ? It was five hundred !'

'Five hundred !' screamed she.

'Five hundred, no less. He gave it to me by a mistake, bad luck to him ! and found it out an hour ago, when he sent for me.'

Lettice stood with open mouth and blank eyes staring at her husband. She did not know what to say. She saw no light that she could give him. She felt terrified, and yet she knew that it would all come right very soon, and that Diana would return her the money. Only, bound as she was by her promise, she could not give Frank this comfort ; and she could imagine what his distress must be

without it, for though she had spoken so easily of his saving fifty pounds, even she knew that he could never make up the five hundred.

'Lettice,' cried he, 'what is to be done? I *did* put it there. You saw me yourself.'

'I did.' The words were uttered scarcely above her breath; they were scarcely audible, but he heard them.

'You did. We spoke of it, and it's gone, and the key I never let out of my pocket. I can't have put it anywhere else after, for it was only just before I went to my father. Lettice dear, help me! What's the meaning of it? what will I do?' He looked so scared and wild with that poor, white face of his,—so unlike the Frank who had courted and married her,—that Lettice felt scared, and wild too, in her inability to assist him and her bewilderment as to what she would say.

'You will find it, Frank, you will find it,' was all she could cry out to him; but she cried that with such heartiness, that the mere manner and words almost comforted him, though the meaning of them did not, for where could he find it? He had put it into the till, and it was gone, and there was nowhere else that he could even look for it, much less that he could hope to find it. He never had walked in his sleep in his life, and even if he had, he had not slept since he put the note in the till;

for he had gone at once to his father, summoned by his mother's telegram.

He stared in Lettice's face, then, unable to make up his mind that there was nothing more that could be done, and yet perfectly well aware that he could do nothing.

'I am a ruined man,' he said at last; 'and I have brought ruin on you, darling, whom I thought to cherish, and whom I love like the veins of my heart.'

Lettice burst into tears.

'Sure, *don't* talk so,' she sobbed out; 'you are *not*—you have *not*—you *will* find it!'





CHAPTER XVI.

'I TOOK IT.'

IT was in vain that Lettice endeavoured to comfort Frank, for Frank was not to be comforted. He felt bewildered with the weight of this misfortune, and the impossibility of seeing a way out of it. At last he begged Lettice to go to bed. It was late enough, and she could do nothing for him. Nothing could be done that night. In the morning he must go to Mr. Hope, and face his fate. He had already searched for the fatal cheque everywhere, in all the places where he knew perfectly well it could not be, as well as in the one place where it should be, yet was not; but he determined to make another hunt through drawer and cabinet and desk once again, so as to feel perfectly certain that it was not in the house. After this search, which he knew must

be ineffectual, he promised Lettice that he would come to bed too.

'It will be found, Frank ; I know it will. You will have it in a day or two,' she kept repeating over and over again. 'Just tell Mr. Hope you'll send it him in two days, or three maybe at the most. Just tell him that, and be easy. Stupid old man ! it's his fault entirely. What right had he to be so careless?' and so, reluctantly enough, Lettice left her husband and went to bed.

She could not sleep for a long time, thinking over all that had happened. Indeed, she did not wish to sleep ; she wanted to be awake when Frank came, and to go on assuring him that all would be right, and must be right, and should be right. She could not help thinking a good deal about Diana, and how she had managed to get away, and what she would do when she discovered that she had five hundred pounds in her possession instead of fifty ; and then came back the one thought that had hardly left her mind since she had heard of Mr. Hope's mistake, how soon would Diana send her the money, free Frank from his difficulties, and herself from the promise of secrecy, that was such a burthen to her ? If she could only see little Doe. Little Doe would be sure to be able to tell her all about it, and probably could even tell her how and when Diana meant to repay the money.

And just at this point in her reveries, though as resolved as ever to be awake when Frank came up, Lettice fell fast asleep, and dreamt not at all of the troubles that filled her mind up to the moment of sleeping, but of woods and of flowers, of flowing rivers and of pretty music. And this is one of the strangest parts of dreaming, that we hardly ever do dream of what we most think of, and never continue in slumber the chain of thoughts last held by the waking mind. She did not know that she had slept, and she did not know that she had been waked by some noise, but she was suddenly aware that there was a dim light in the room, and that Frank was standing there.

‘Frank!’ she cried; ‘and haven’t you been to bed at all?’ Then she saw, to her surprise, that he was not undressing, but was putting his clothes on.

‘I have been in bed, but you were sleeping so soundly, poor darling; and then I went to sleep myself for a minute or two, and I woke up with a sudden shock and a recollection that explained everything.’

‘My!’ cried Lettice, ‘what can that be?’

‘Just this: I had *not* the key with me. I changed my coat before I went away, and left the key in the pocket of it.’

‘And what does that prove?’ she said faintly,

her heart seeming to stand still with a throb of fear.

'That villain Pat has robbed me, and he came with a poor mouth and the pitiful story that his mother was lying, and I let him go home to her like the soft fool that I am ; and if he will not be off to America by this, with the five hundred pounds in his pocket, it's more luck than I deserve, that's all.'

'And what will you do now ?'

'What will I do ? Why, go to his mother's, to be sure, and see if he is there, and if he is not, telegraph to Cork, I suppose, to stop his getting on board an American ship—the rascal !'

Lettice felt excessively frightened. Then she remembered that he would find Pat at his mother's, and would discover that he was innocent ; so she contented herself with saying :

'It's not he that took it, I'm sure of that, anyhow.'

'It's no one else, then, unless you will have taken it yourself,' replied her husband, laughing a little grimly ; and Lettice, at the words, crouched down and hid her head under the bedclothes.

Frank went away, hope and anger in his face instead of the helpless bewilderment of the preceding evening. But there was no more sleep for Lettice that night. It was very early morning, the twilight before sunrise was all the light to be seen,

and it was hours before she could get up and find a room fit to go into. But there was no more sleep for her, and she lay awake thinking and thinking, the thoughts chasing one another through her brain till she felt as if she was losing all control over them, and was going mad. She assured herself that it must all end right and that the good end must come soon ; and she supposed it was just as well that Frank should have taken up this idea about Pat, as the five miles to his mother's and back, and the examination into the matter, would take time and prevent his going to Mr. Hope as soon as, otherwise, he would have done. Perhaps she should hear from Diana in time to enable him to take the five hundred pounds with him when he *did* go, and if so, after all, no harm would have been done.

Diana Hope must have left Clanmena more than twenty-four hours now. She was certain to return the note the day before, so that Lettice would receive it that very day. She might change it and keep a little, but surely not more than they could make up ; or, more likely, she and Dick Harrington would only spend the money she had also taken, and not change the note at all when she found what it was ; and Lettice was already wondering with girlish glee whether she could manage to get it back into the till without Frank's knowledge, and give him the surprise of finding it there quite unexpectedly,

so that he would be forced to believe that it had really been there all the time.

She laughed aloud at the idea of this, and again longed for the moment, as she had so often longed lately, when the secrecy and the mystery would be over, and she could tell everything to her husband.

'And after that,' thought Lettice, 'I shall have no more secrets from him. I don't like it at all, having secrets from him.'

When morning was well established, and the sun shone over the earth, she rose from her bed, feeling in very good spirits, and expecting and believing that all the difficulties would be comfortably settled in the course of the day. She waited breakfast half an hour for Frank, but he did not make his appearance, and the appetite of youth and health being strong within her, she was compelled to sit down to her breakfast without him. She kept coffee hot for him, however, and had the forethought not to let his two eggs be boiled till he came in. She was certainly improving in housekeeping.

'I will make him very comfortable when he comes in, dear fellow,' she thought. 'It *is* pleasant to take care of one's husband. I never thought of that when he was courting me; it seemed to me then to be only Me. But this is quite a new pleasure. Marriage is even better than I expected.'

At last, flushed, heated, and tired, this husband

who was assuming a new importance in his wife's eyes returned to her.

The hot coffee was poured out and the eggs boiled and put before him, and he sat down and ate his breakfast in silence.

'And what did Pat say?' said Lettice at last, unable to bear the suspense any longer. 'Sure the poor boy never touched the note at all, did he now, Frank?'

'The poor boy! the poor thief, you'd better be saying, Lettice. What doubt can there be of his guilt? Who else will have taken it?'

'Did he confess it, then?' she asked with a sly twinkle in her eye.

'He did not. He is a hardened fellow. But he will confess it before I have done with him. He is in the hands of the police.'

Lettice gave a scream and jumped up from her chair.

'Oh, not really! You never were so cruel. Not the police! Oh, the poor boy!'

Frank looked at her surprised.

'Deed he is,' he replied; 'and why does it shock you? The hardened young villain, to steal five hundred pounds out of his master's till! And what did you expect that I was going to do? Was I to let him off, if you please?'

'But the police, Frank!' she cried; 'not the police!'

'And what will the police be for, but to apprehend thieves? But it's true for you, Letty, that I've had a sad scene to go through, and maybe it will be the death of the poor mother. She's ill enough, God help her.'

Lettice looked white and wild, and began walking about the room, wringing her hands.

'Frank,' she said at last, 'listen to me. He did not take it!'

'Did not he?' replied her husband coolly; 'who did, then, if you please?'

'Never mind who took it. You will get it back again, I know; and I know that poor boy did not take it. He did *not*, Frank; and you must believe me and take him away from the police, and send him back to his mother,' and with the last words she gave a little sob.

'Be quiet, Lettice darling. It's distressing yourself you are for no reason. The boy is a hardened sinner; he was sure to come to a bad end, and it's better for him he is found out early.'

'It is not. Pat is innocent. Frank, I know he is innocent. I know who took it.'

Now it was Frank's turn to jump from his chair and to look almost as white and wild as Lettice, as he seized her by both her wrists and gazed into her eyes, astonished and incredulous.

'You know who took it?' he said slowly.

'I do,' she cried, shrinking from him. 'Oh, Frank, Frank, let me go!'

'It is not possible,' he said; 'you cannot know. Lettice, how dare you tell me a lie?'

'It is not a lie; I do know,' she exclaimed angrily. 'Pat is innocent, and you must let him go. Oh, Frank, some one must tell his mother directly—the poor, poor woman!'

'I will not let him go; I will not send to his mother. He will be tried, and condemned, and transported; there is quite enough evidence against him. Lettice, if you are not pretending, you *must* tell me all you know. Nothing else can save Pat. And his mother will die, and it will be you who killed her. Who took it?'

Lettice shrank and cowered at the frightful words; then while he still held her captive by the hands, she stood erect, and cried out quite loudly:

'I took it!'

Her husband let go her hands, started back several paces from her, and sank into a chair, trembling and looking as if he was going to faint.

Lettice stood staring at him, frightened out of her senses, and not in the least knowing what to do or say next.

'*You* took it!' he said at last in a voice that she would not have recognised as his; 'you took it! Am I mad, or did you say *you* took it?'

There was no answer, but the silence was answer enough.

'Where is it?' he exclaimed, as if with a sudden hope; 'why did you take it?'

Lettice shook her head.

'I cannot tell you,' she said.

'You cannot tell me?'

'I cannot, Frank. It will all come right. Oh, do tell Pat's mother?'

'Yes,' he said slowly, 'I will tell Pat's mother, and I will tell Mr. Hope also. My God, what ruin is this? My own wife a thief!'

'I am not a thief! How dare you say it?'

'Not a thief, and took that five hundred pound note? I will know. You shall answer me. Lettice, I will never speak to you, look at you, live with you again, unless you answer me. What have you done with it?'

He spoke very sternly, more sternly than she had had any idea he could speak to any one, most of all to her, and Lettice's heart died within her. But her promise! She could not break the promise that Diana Hope had made her swear to keep.

'I cannot tell you,' was all she said, and she looked miserable, and he thought guilty besides.

'Very well,' he said, 'I shall leave you for a little time while I get that poor boy his liberty, and he

shall go to his mother ; and then I will come back, and try once more if you will tell me.'

He spoke in a low, subdued voice, like a man that has made up his mind to the worst, and walked out of the room very quietly without even looking at her.

Lettice remained behind almost in a stupor. What could she do? Oh, what could she do? Oh, how was it she had dared to take the money? Oh, why had she mixed herself up in Diana Hope's affairs? Oh, when should she be able to tell Frank?

The letters were brought in at that moment, and she saw that one was directed to her in Diana's hand. She tore it open as a famishing creature might snatch food, and with unbelieving eyes read the following words:—

KIND FRIEND,—It is awfully jolly. We are off to Italy. Dick's friend did not turn up, so but for you we should have been done for. *Five hundred* thanks. Burn this, and don't forget the promise you swore to keep, for breaking it will ruin us.—Yours gratefully,
'DIANA HARRINGTON.'

Yes, it was with unbelieving eyes she read this heartless little note. Off to Italy! '*Five hundred* thanks' underlined, as if to let her know she had the five hundred pounds. The promise she had sworn to

keep! What should she do? what could she do? Could she never tell Frank? Must he always look at her with those stern eyes? Lettice began to feel very ill. Her undisciplined mind, untrained and unused to endurance, could not grasp or bear all that had so suddenly fallen on it. A bewildered, stunned sensation came upon her. She sat still, staring blankly forward, doing nothing and almost feeling nothing.

Meantime Frank had gone off to liberate Pat and send him to his mother.

'Before it is too late,' he said bitterly to himself, 'or maybe the poor old woman's death will lie at our door.'

What sudden misery had fallen on him since yesterday! What dreadful annihilations of all hope and happiness had overwhelmed him! *What* was it? It could not be what it seemed to be, what her own voice had told him that it was; it could not be that Lettice was a thief!

He went to the lock-up house and withdrew his charge against Pat. He then desired him to run off to his mother and make her happy. After that, what was next to be done?

While he was asking himself that question, he met Mr. Vellacot, the draper, in the street.

'The top of the morning to you, Mr. Tippington,' that cheerful man said very cheerfully. 'And here's

a little account I was just bringing you. Short reckonings make long friends.'

He took a bundle of little accounts out of his pocket, and handed to Frank the special one that belonged to him, and then bustled on to attend to his other business.

Frank did not recognise, in the chaos of his mind, the fact that he had no account at Vellacot's while mechanically opening the note, and reading without at first understanding it the items of Lettice's bill. The cuffs, collars, and gloves purchased for herself opened the account; then came the bag, dress, shawl, and handkerchiefs, and the total was seventeen pounds nine shillings.

It was not the amount of the bill that struck a dagger into Frank Tippington's heart. It was this fresh discovery against his wife—the confirmation of every fear, the destruction of every hope, that it brought upon him. Since his marriage, occasional doubts of the wisdom of his choice had flitted across his mind, unrecognised by him at the time as doubts, called up only by aggravating circumstances, and forgotten under the influence of kind words and gentle kisses; but all, and more than all rushed back to him now—not only what he had felt or what these doubts meant, but all they might have meant, all they must mean under the dreadful light that had burst upon him. His wife was a deceiver,

an impostor, a bad girl who had taken him in and made him marry her. His wife! His Lettice! Could it be? Was it possible?

Still, however extravagant and false she might be, that could not account for her having stolen the five hundred pounds, as she evidently had not paid debts with it, or this bill would not still be unpaid. He had eaten no breakfast, he had slept hardly at all, he had risen from his bed in the middle of the night, and now, standing out in the bright, beautiful morning sunshine which poured down on his head, his brain reeled and turned giddy with all the horrible thoughts that pressed upon it, and the ruin that stared him in the face. He staggered, and would have fallen with a sudden sensation of faintness; but a friendly hand caught him ere he fell, and Brian Donolly, who happened to be passing at the moment, supported him into his office, which was close by, and placing him in a chair, loosened his collar and threw a little water in his face.

Frank, who had never fainted before, was a long time coming back quite to be himself again; and in that painful transition state which I suppose we all of us know, between death and life, he smiled a wan, sickly smile, and said drearily:

'Why did you not let me die?'

'My *dear* boy!' cried his astonished friend.

Then Frank looked pitifully at him. He had not

yet recovered full command of himself, or entire consciousness of his life. He shook his head sadly from side to side.

'Lettice,' he said, speaking painfully and with difficulty. 'It is Lettice.'

'Is she ill?' cried Brian Donolly, alarmed.

'She has ruined me,' was the reply, and he burst into sudden tears.

These brought him more to himself, and as they did so a hint dropped by Brian some days before as to the advisability of looking after Lettice's acquaintances, and the possibility of her former Rostrevor acquaintances not being desirable for her to retain now—a hint lightly dropped and more lightly heard, flashed with a new, unexpected meaning into his mind. He fancied that he saw a significant expression in Donolly's face. He grasped his arm and cried out, 'What do you know?'

'Very little,' replied the other soothingly. 'Compose yourself, my dear boy, and I will tell you just all I do know; but it is not much.'

'Tell me; maybe it will explain things.'

Brian Donolly related frankly what he had seen on the night of the practising—the face at the window, the incident of the letter, and the song about the bridge, of which he had thought nothing at the time; but business having called him in that

direction the next morning, he had been shocked and confounded by seeing his friend's wife in close conversation with the same man who had handed her the letter the night before. He saw him again give it to her ; and when he gave it, he was standing by the pebble ridge, near the little bridge ; and then the meaning of the song suddenly flashed upon him. He had not known what to do, and did not like even to tell his wife of circumstances so suspicious ; but he had dropped that hint about former acquaintances to his friend, thinking that his doing so might put him a little on his guard.

Frank listened as a man listens to his doom, when that doom is utter misery, ruin, and disgrace. He could not doubt, from Brian Donolly's description, that the man was the same to whom he had seen Lettice handing a letter in the shop. He imagined further that she had deceived him when, in answer to his question, she had said he was the stranger whom she had met accidentally by the river. He was a former acquaintance, perhaps a former lover, whose very existence as such was to be concealed from her husband, and whose silence (probably) was to be bought by the fifty pound note. She had given that note in ignorance of its real amount ; but the man who could take fifty pounds from her would not scruple to pocket five hundred ! It was a tissue of deceit and wickedness from beginning to end, and

he, Frank Tippington, was a duped husband, and the most miserable man on earth.

He commanded himself sufficiently not to betray his wife to his friend, but his white ghastly face and hollow eyes showed that friend what he suffered. And though Lettice was not the guilty creature he supposed her to be, this suffering was actually brought upon him by her, by the wife who dearly loved him—brought upon him by her thoughtlessness, her vanity, and her want of fixed principle and a high standard of right. Much is said of what men make their womenkind suffer ; but women, too, have the power of making noble and high-principled men bite the dust in bitterness and shame. And they can do this without actual sin, and from what they themselves consider only little, trifling faults. It would be well if girls laid this to heart, and reflected on all to which these 'little trifling faults' may lead.

Frank Tippington thanked his friend for speaking as he had done, and in doing so gave him a grasp of the hand in which he seemed to himself to take leave of youth and happiness, and the bright times in which their friendship had grown and flourished, for ever.

He left him, manning himself for what was still before him ; and Brian watched him as he went down the street with pitying, regretful eyes.

'Poor fellow!' he said. 'Poor fellow! And to this state a noble man is brought by the follies of a woman,' and with a sudden rush of gratitude and love, he offered up a thanksgiving to God for his own Mary.





CHAPTER XVII.

WHAT HE DID.

WHEN Frank again stood before Lettice and looked down into her face, he seemed to her like an avenging angel—young, stern, and beautiful.

He was entirely changed from the devoted lover and husband, who, if angry for a minute, was in a minute appeased, and when differing from her in opinion, was so easily coaxed, if not to change his, at all events to give it up to hers. And as Lettice felt a terrible fear of his anger rise up in her heart, she also felt a new sort of love rise with it—a love that thought of him, not of herself; the true love that leads to devotion, sacrifice, and the annihilation of self.

‘Lettice,’ he said, ‘I’ve come to give you one more chance. Tell me the truth. Why did you take the money, and to whom did you give it?’

Should she break her vow? Should she tell him and be forgiven and happy? He would not blame her very much after all. She had been foolish and wrong, and in the light of this new love in her heart, she had a glimmering, for the first time, of how foolish and how wrong she had been. But if she confessed all, he would forgive her, she thought, and love her again.

Then she looked up into his eyes, and she felt that he was noble and true. Could he ever love her or forgive her with anything but the forgiveness of contempt if she broke her promise, a promise that she had sworn to keep.

‘Oh, Frank,’ she cried, ‘I cannot tell you!’

‘You can,’ he said; ‘every one can do the right.’

‘It will not be the right. I’ve promised!’

‘Promised!’ he repeated, and there was disdain in his voice, she could not understand why; ‘promised to deceive your husband! And you will not tell me? Think better of it, Lettice. Give yourself a chance; give *me* a chance, Lettice.’

She was silent. Her own mind was in an agony of distress. Her silence produced the impression of obstinacy and resolution in the wrong.

‘Did you give it to that man I found you in the shop with?’

Her mouth was forming itself into the shape of ‘No,’ but as he continued no word was uttered.

‘Is it he who has got it? Did he try to give

a letter to you that night Donolly stopped him? Was it yourself met him by the little bridge? Yes—yes—yes!’ he cried passionately; ‘I see “yes” in your face to every question I ask you. Say it with your lips, girl; confess your sins, whatever they are, and I will know what to do.’

In Lettice’s innocent mind no dreaming of her husband’s real meaning arose. She could not understand the nature of the passion that burst from him, or why the idea that she had given the note to the fisherman appeared to make him more angry than the fact that she had taken it. In taking it at all, surely the sin, if it was a sin, lay; if she gave it to another person, it showed at least that it was from pity or generosity she had sinned, not from any more selfish or baser motive.

She shivered, trembled, and at last spoke, answering him in a low voice.

‘I can’t explain, then. I took the note, and that’s all I can tell you.’

Frank drew a long breath. It was no worse than he had expected; it only confirmed all that he had believed. Yet he felt like a man who has just received his death-blow, and has received it when a long vista of life was before him. He *had* hoped, then. Though he did not know it himself, he had hoped.

‘Put some of your things together,’ he said quietly; ‘you are going away.’

‘Going away, Frank?’

‘You are going to my mother. Put a few things together. I will send the rest after you. There is not a minute to lose. The car will be starting already.’

‘I will not go to your mother!’

‘You will. Do what I tell you, Lettice. My mother wants you, and you will go there. It is no use your saying a word; do what I tell you.’

He spoke now, indeed, as he had never spoken before, so quiet, so stern, so determined. Should she try to coax him? should she fling her arms round his neck, and tell him she was his own little Lettice, and would not leave him? She advanced a step towards him for this purpose, but something in his face made her stop short; she *felt* that he would refuse her kisses!

Then her spirit rose, frightened and sorry as she was. Anger came to her aid. He was unjust; he had no confidence in her; he was treating her as if she was a common thief, when he must know that she only took the money for a special reason, and had told him that it would be returned, and that all would be right; he did not trust her; he was putting himself in the wrong by behaving to her as he did. It was cruel, it was heartless of him to send her away from him.

Very well, then, she would go. It was not far,

and she felt certain it would not be for long. Absence would be his best cure. Away from her, he would remember how much he loved her. He would find it impossible to live without her. He was punishing himself as much as he was punishing her when he sent her away, and he would discover this by the following morning and come after her. Then there would be mutual forgiveness and happy reconciliation, and after this she would make him the best wife in the world. She would yield her wishes to his ; she would sew on his buttons, and darn his socks ; she would look after the dinner and lay the cloth ; she would make the best tradesman's wife in the world ; and she would give up being genteel, and be content with being happy.

With these thoughts and ideas comforting her under the dreadful circumstances, which formed by far the greatest trial that Lettice had ever had to endure, she in silence obeyed her husband, and in a few minutes appeared again before him, dressed for travelling, and with a small bag in her hand.

He looked at her, and said bitterly, ' This would be a good opportunity to use that travelling bag I would not give you, and the dress, and the shawl, and all the grand things you bought at Vellacot's. But I will send them 'all back to him ; you will not have one.'

She started, and then almost laughed at the

complication of mistakes, wondering by what road they should ever travel out of them. The things he expected to return to Vellacot's were half way to Italy by this time.

She made him no answer, for what answer was there that she could make him? And he more than ever believed that she was guilty, sullen, and unrepentant.

Never was sullenness farther from any one's mood and thoughts than from Lettice's at this moment. There was a little resentment, perhaps, against him for being able to send her away from him; and this gave her strength to bear the being sent away, in the sweet, spiteful hope that twenty-four hours would prove to her husband that he could not live without her. And beyond this, there was only the thought of how happy she would make him, and how good a wife she would be.

Of course Lettice, trusting in her own strength, or, perhaps a shade better, in the strength of her love, would have failed in all she believed that she could do, would a hundred times a day have relapsed into her fatal gentility, and thought that Frank ought to yield to her and not she to Frank. Her principles were unfix'd, and she had not yet learned to go for help where only help can be given. But she had taken a step in the right direction, and not a small step either. Love is a great purifier.

Frank was naturally blind to her state of mind, which he believed to be as bad as it well could be. He commanded himself to be patient. Life for him, he felt, was over. In Lettice's ignorance of the world and of business matters, she thought little of the consequences of the loss of the note. Having rescued Pat by her own confession, it never occurred to her that some one else must suffer in Pat's place. She was thinking so much of her husband's displeasure, and of his sending her away from him, that the money loss, in which all the rest originated, had slipped from her mind, except as it bore on her relation with Frank. But with Frank it was different. Keenly alive to the dishonour and the disgrace she had brought on him, his whole existence lay before him in ruins. His love was shattered, and his life as a citizen, his public life, was shattered also ; and all this havoc was wrought by the little white hand he had so earnestly prayed to possess, and on one rosy-tipped finger of which he had thought himself the happiest man alive when allowed to slip a wedding-ring.

Very quietly and with a sublime patience, considering what he, by his own will, knew lay before him, this young tradesman carried out the part he had determined to perform. He walked with his wife to the inn whence the car started. He put her on it ; he commended her to the care of the

driver, who promised himself to put her in the train ; he telegraphed to his mother to meet her at her final destination ; and then, hardest trial of all, he kissed her—he kissed the face he loved so much with lips so cold that she started back affrighted : they were like the lips of a corpse.

But Lettice was on the car, which was just starting, when she received this kiss ; and though she made an impulsive attempt to jump off, cling to him, refuse to leave him, insist on being his own dear Lettice again, she was prevented by the restraining hand of the passenger next her, and in another moment it was too late and all was over. Frank's retreating figure was half way down the street in one direction, and the car was whirling round a corner and carrying her out of sight of him in the other.

Poor Lettice, she cried nearly the whole way to the station ; but they were not bitter tears she shed, for she mourned only for the moment, for the present little separation, for the present misunderstanding between her and Frank, which a short time, she felt convinced, could set right, when they would be happier and she better than they and she had ever been before.

It was very different with Frank. With a resolute despair he went to his fate, the hardest, he knew, that it was possible he could meet.

First he entered his own house, where the shop had never been opened that day. Should he keep it closed? No; that would be giving up at once. Pat had returned from his mother, made happy, poor old creature, by his visit; so he desired him to take down the shutters and attend to the shop. After this he tried to eat and drink a little, for he was most anxious not to break down, but to bear himself like a man.

Then he went straight to the Castle, not walking slowly or lingering, but with a quick, brisk step. He was shown into Mr. Hope's presence, in his study, who accosted him politely with apologies for the trouble he had given him.

'I put the two notes together in one place, Mr. Tippington, and I must have looked too carelessly at the one I gave you, and there's the mistake.'

'I suppose you will not have any doubt that you gave me the five hundred pound note, Mr. Hope?'

'Any doubt, my good sir? Certainly none; and the fact of your having the note in your possession is sufficient proof, I presume,' and Mr. Hope laughed at the question, which seemed to him rather astray from the subject, and then laughed a little more at his answer, which he flattered himself was a clincher.

'Mr. Hope, I have not got the note.'

Mr. Hope stopped laughing in a great hurry, but

not in the least understanding what was the real meaning of the words addressed to him.

‘You have not got the note?’

‘No, sir.’

‘You mean that you have given it away as fifty pounds? Well, this is extremely vexatious. You really ought to have looked at a note before giving it away; and it would have been more business-like to have kept the actual note, Mr. Tippington, and not changed it for your own money. Receivers of other people’s subscriptions cannot be too cautious in this particular.’

Here was a loophole for escape. Could he not let Mr. Hope continue under this belief, and so, at least, gain time while he pretended to be following up a search for the note? And had not Mr. Hope brought this on himself by his own carelessness, while he had the effrontery to blame Frank for his? —a hope of escape, like a rope thrown out to a man who believed drowning inevitable.

But no; Frank rejected the hope, turned resolutely from the rope. His wife was the thief. His part was at once to shield her, and to take the burden of her sin on himself.

So when Mr. Hope asked him somewhat fretfully, ‘To whom did you give the note?’ he replied in the same quiet, patient manner that had been his since he had accepted the trouble, ‘To no one; the note

is gone, and I have come to give myself up to justice.'

Then Hope stared at him as if he did not believe him, and actually had not a word to say in reply.

'I believe,' said Frank, 'that it is possible I will recover the note, but I don't know. I can't give it you now, and maybe I never will be able—not but what I may; but I don't think it, and I could not make it up, any ways, not for years. If it had been fifty, I might; but not five hundred. So it is best to make a clean breast and to tell you the truth, and you will do what you like with me.'

'But this is impossible,' said Mr. Hope; 'you are talking nonsense. If it were not the morning, and you a respectable man, I should say you were drunk. What have you done with the note? Who did you give it to? Where is it?'

'There's nothing more I can tell you. The note is gone, and I'm here.'

'And you expect, Mr. Tippington, that by this very extraordinary conduct you will prevail on me to let you off? You think I shall suppose there is something more behind, and that you did not take the note? But you mistake your man, sir—you mistake your man very much indeed. I shall give you into the hands of the police without a moment's compunction.'

'I expect nothing else, sir.'

‘What have you done with the note?’

‘I don’t know, sir.’

‘Did you take it yourself, or who took it if you did not?’

‘I cannot tell you anything. I have not got the note, and so I have come myself, and I am ready to bear the consequences.’

‘You are, are you? And do you know what the consequences will be? I shall send for the police and give you into their custody while I make out a warrant for your committal to jail.’

‘I expect no less, sir.’

‘And then you will be tried as a thief.’

The colour mounted to the very roots of his hair. He made no reply, but after a minute said, for he could not repress the exclamation, ‘God’s will be done.’

Mr. Hope looked at him with an astonishment that was not unmingled with disgust. ‘Is that cant?’ he thought to himself; ‘is he a hypocrite?’

‘Do you think it was God’s will that you stole my money?’ he asked sharply.

‘I beg your pardon, sir,’ replied Frank, ‘I did not expect to say *that*. It’s absurd it must seem to you; I know it must.’

Mr. Hope was fairly puzzled by the customer he had to deal with.

‘Of course, sir,’ Frank continued, ‘after giving

myself up in this manner, I will not be running away. I will stay here safe enough while you make out the warrant, if you please.'

'Oh, you will not be running away?'

'Why should I?' replied he simply. 'I'd have done it without coming to you at all if I'd meant that.'

'I wonder why you did come to me,' said Mr. Hope, looking steadily at him.

Frank made no reply to that.

'I'll tell you just what I think about it,' continued Mr. Hope; 'I think it was a plant, a sensational situation like a play. You thought I was an uncommonly soft chap, and that I should be so taken with the honesty of your conduct that I might let you off. You Irishmen are up to anything dodgy.'

'God knows, I thought nothing of the sort,' said Frank hastily. 'I have always been told you were a hard man. I gave myself up because I felt it was the only thing I *could* do.'

'Come now, I don't want to make you out worse than you are. I like you for telling me I'm called a hard man. I don't believe you meant to steal five hundred pounds,—I suppose you're not such a fool as to take what you could never repay;—but I think you paid some debt with my fifty pound note, expecting to be able to make it up in time.'

And I think it was some disgraceful debt—something you are ashamed to speak about ; and so you came here hoping I should not take any steps about it if you gave yourself up. But if my idea is true, you must see that it would be far better for you to tell the truth, however much the truth may tell against you. It may save your being committed for trial ; and if you *are* tried, it is sure to come out, and with the utmost publicity.’

Frank listened attentively, but shook his head when the other had finished speaking.

‘It’s not so,’ he said ; ‘it’s no use. Sure if it was so, I’d say it at once.’

‘Then I shall make out the warrant for your committal to prison.’

Frank heaved a great sigh ; it was almost a sigh of relief. To a respectable young man who had always held a high character and shown that he deserved to hold it, a young man religiously brought up and who had not departed from the standard set up for him in his childhood, a young man rising in the world from the respectability of his parentage and his own good conduct and steadiness, this conversation with Mr. Hope seemed the very worst trial that he could endure. Prison would be a palace of repose after it. His weary heart was stunned by the miserable discoveries he believed himself to have made about his wife, and to be in prison, shut

out from all the world, alone with himself and his anguish, was the greatest consolation he could think of.

Mr. Hope watched him narrowly. He saw the expression almost like that of relief in his face, and he could not understand him. Then a new idea occurred to him. The whole thing was extraordinary, almost unparalleled, for Frank Tippington's high character had been well known to him before he granted him the lease of his shop; and that this young tradesman, so happily launched in life, just married too, should first steal the five hundred pounds and immediately afterwards give himself up for doing so, was simply impossible.

Was it possible that he was a monomaniac, wrongly accusing himself of a crime he had not committed?

With this new idea entering his head, an idea that certainly explained away the difficulties of the case, Mr. Hope thought it would be well to speak to some of the young man's friends before he made out the warrant.

'Would you not like to see your wife?' he asked suddenly, wishing to take him off his guard.

A strange spasm, like actual physical pain, crossed Frank's face before he replied.

'My wife,' he said, 'is not at home. She has gone on a visit to my mother.'

This confirmed Mr. Hope's new notions. The man had been left alone, the wife perhaps had herself become alarmed at his state and had gone to fetch his mother, and left alone, this idea had preyed upon his mind and obtained possession of it. There is no commoner sign of incipient madness than the believing oneself guilty of some great crime.

Mr. Hope reflected for a moment, and then resolved what to do. He opened the door of a small apartment within his study, where he transacted business with those not admitted to the study itself—a room furnished only with common chairs and a table, and with an outer door opening into a yard. He went in and locked the outer door. Then he requested Frank to wait in the little chamber till he was ready for him. Frank, only too glad to be alone, obeyed the request, threw himself into a chair, flung his arms on the table, and concealed his face on them.

Mr. Hope, after shutting him in, examined some papers to ascertain who had recommended Frank for the shop and gave security for him as a good tenant; for Mr. Hope was a very strict man of business, and knew all about his own affairs.

The man who had gone security for Frank was one of the most respectable in the place—Mr. Brian Donolly, the wine merchant; so to him Mr. Hope

sent a special request that he would be so good as to step up to the Castle immediately.

Mr. Donolly attended to the summons without any delay, though his mind was entirely occupied with his poor friend Frank's domestic affairs, with which he did not at all connect Mr. Hope's wish to speak to him.

When that gentleman had explained the matter in hand clearly to him, he felt more shocked and distressed than he had ever done in his life before. That Frank had stolen the money, he could not for one moment believe; but if not he, who *had* stolen it? That Lettice was the thief never for an instant occurred to him. It was one thing for a woman to have had a lover before her marriage, whose acquaintance she imprudently resumed afterwards (and of anything worse than imprudence Brian hoped he might allow himself to acquit Lettice), but it was quite another to rob her husband of five hundred pounds; so this solution of the mystery did not cross his mind.

Mr. Hope's solutions he did not, however, for a moment accept either. The idea of Frank being a monomaniac was absurd; he was as sure of his sanity as he was of his honesty. There was something more in the matter than met the eye. There was only one thing he could think of in this emergency, only one way of helping his friend, and this he

instantly proposed. He would stand bail for him to any amount Mr. Hope chose to name ; and after his bail was taken, he would go home with him and do his best to discover the truth that lay at the bottom of this miserable story.

And Mr. Hope, still adhering to the idea that they had a madman to manage, with the calm pertinacity of an obstinate but gentlemanly man, agreed at once that this was the best thing to be done, and that he would take the bail without any more questioning about it.

‘If you follow my advice, Mr. Donolly,’ he said, ‘you will send for Doctor Mitchel. I have a strong suspicion that a blister on the nape of the neck, or a dose of tartar emetic, might do more towards the discovery of my five hundred pound note than the best jury in Ireland.’





CHAPTER XVIII.

AT THE FARM.

LETTICE arrived at the farmhouse full of good resolutions. Her fresh, pretty young face delighted her mother-in-law, and her manner was both subdued and caressing. She listened attentively to the evening reading, and willingly joined her clear, bright voice in the hymn. Calm, sweet summer reigned over the country, pure and delicate as only summer and the country can be. Lettice looked about her with pleasure, considered the farmhouse not at all a bad sort of old place, smelled the honeysuckles with delight, longed for Frank, and thought his mother a little like him.

His father was better, but she did not see him that night, as he was asleep before she arrived. The next day it was promised her that she should be taken into his room and pay him a visit.

'The likes of you will do him good,' the old lady said kindly, and Lettice blushed, not ill pleased by the compliment she saw in her eyes, though she was too discreet to utter it; for Mrs. Tippington was one of the old-fashioned school, who think it indiscreet to let girls know that they are pretty.

Lettice went to sleep that night thinking of Frank. 'He is forgiving me now,' she reflected; 'he has forgiven me. He won't care about that stupid bank note. He will come to me to-morrow, and we shall love each other more, and be happier than ever. And I like his mother, and that little dappled cow was delightful. I will milk her, and I will learn to make butter, and perhaps it might not be a bad plan to sell the shop and get a farm instead. Diana Hope, I'm sure, will send me back the money, and we shall never'— Here Lettice's reveries ended, and her dreams began, for she fell asleep.

Little indeed did she guess of all that her husband was going through during these tranquil hours she spent so happily at the farmhouse. Little did she guess of his misery, his shame, and his despair, or that he was now a self-convicted criminal, waiting his trial for theft.

The next morning she rose early and ran out of doors before breakfast. She visited the farm-yard, and kissed the little dappled cow with *empressement*. She ran about among the cocks and hens, and tried

to catch the lambs ; but she positively refused to look at the pigs : she hated pigs, they were so ungenteel. But for the pigs, Lettice would have forgotten her gentility.

She brought proudly in some eggs to boil for breakfast, and helped to toast the bread and lay the table.

‘I find that I am growing quite good,’ she said to herself, ‘good and useful. I don’t suppose I shall ever be foolish, or giddy, or worry Frank any more. It is quite easy, I find, and quite nice, and as happy as possible. How glad I am !’

After breakfast she paid the old man, Frank’s father, a visit. She was a little afraid of him as he lay there on his bed, his face pale and cadaverous-looking, his features large, and his grey hair and beard lying thick about him.

‘I think,’ she said to herself, ‘I won’t have *much* to do with sick old men, however good I am. I don’t like them, and they frighten me.’

‘Bless your pretty face, it does me good to look at it,’ said her husband’s father, and as he said it she saw a something in his eyes that reminded her of her husband. She shut her own in a sort of terror. Would Frank ever come to look like, to be like that ? Oh, how dreadful to be old ! to have been young, and so know what it is, and then to be old !

She shivered a little at the idea.

‘Old people ought all to herd together,’ she thought. ‘They like each other, no doubt, and they should be shut up in a pen, and made as comfortable as possible ; but we should know nothing about them—that would be the fair plan.’

‘What are you thinking of, my jewel?’ asked the old man at that moment.

She laughed.

‘Nothing worth talking about,’ she said.

Then the mother-in-law asked her to fetch the big Bible and read them a Psalm, which she obediently did, feeling a little afraid as she did so, and listening to her own voice, while it repeated the beautiful words, as if she had never heard it before. It sounded to her like a strange new voice that could not be her own.

‘Have they lived this way all their lives?’ she thought. ‘Have they been always good and pious, and dwelt among sweet things and fair sights? How fond they seem of each other, though they are so old! Did they always agree? Did they never quarrel and bicker, as Frank and I do? And was she always as good as he? or did she grow good from being with him? Well, I am sure I feel as good as possible now, and Frank and I will be as happy as possible. How soon can he come? When will he be here? Sure he must

have found out by this time that he can't live without me?'

The first half, or perhaps three parts of the day, during which Frank did not arrive, Lettice was sweet, gay, and caressing. After that she began to weary for her husband, counting the hours and the minutes, and expecting that each one as it passed would bring him to her side.

But the day went by, and he did not come; the evening went by, and the night fell, and no Frank made his appearance. It was with the utmost difficulty that Lettice prevented her tears from falling, and did not let the old couple perceive her dejection and disappointment; and when at last, prayers said, the chapter read, and the hymn sung, she went to her own room, the first thing she did was to throw herself on the bed, and cry the bitter, refreshing, delightful tears of youth.

The next morning she felt as if she must break her promise, and bring happiness back to her home by so breaking it. At breakfast she led the conversation to promises, and asked Mrs. Tippington her opinion about them. In Mrs. Tippington's eyes there was only one opinion that could be held—promises were sacred. They were *not* like pie-crust, made to be broken.

'But if you make a promise without knowing

what it will lead to,' persisted Lettice, 'and it makes you and everybody else miserable?'

'Sure it is a promise still,' was the reply of the unflinching dame; 'and what has being miserable got to do with it at all? It's your duty you have to be thinking about, honey, not whether it's miserable or not miserable that you are.'

Lettice sighed deeply. Duty was such a hard, tiresome sort of thing compared with happiness. And what would happen if Diana Hope never relieved her from the intolerable burthen of this promise, if Frank never forgave her, and she was never happy again? She could have shrieked aloud as these ideas, brought up by the old lady's remark, rushed into her mind; but she comforted herself with the reflection that she was too silly and it was all nonsense. The idea of her never being happy again! Unhappiness was such an impossible thing that it was mere folly to think about it. Some way or other everything was sure to come right.

'Then we are always bound by promises?' was all she said, but there was discontent in her voice.

'Always and aye,' was the cheerful reply; 'and careful we should be in making them. Promises are awful things.'

'And how will we help making them when maybe we are pressed, and at the time it is all easy and leading to nothing?'

'By remembering what a solemn thing it is, and that it is binding on us for ever, and so never making light of passing our word.'

'And how *can* we remember?' cried the girl impetuously. 'And if we will always be remembering that way, it's life itself that will not be worth having.'

'It's the way to *make* life worth living,' said the old lady quietly; 'and little it will be worth without it, then. Ask Frank.'

'Oh, ask Frank!' cried Lettice, scarcely herself knowing what she meant by speaking almost angrily.

That day had passed heavily enough to Frank. With quiet resolution he had refused to tell his friend Brian Donolly anything, or to throw any light on the subject. The young fellow appeared in quite a new character, and seemed an older man than the other, so much his senior, and till then his adviser and superior. He managed to lay all he said aside quietly, but with a determination that put Brian out of countenance and prevented his even hinting at Lettice's name.

Donolly relieved himself on his return home by telling his wife all about it, but she was quite indignant at the idea that Lettice could have anything to do with the abstraction of the five hundred pound note. It was just as impossible, she assured

him, as if he was accusing her of being concerned in a murder. What was the meaning of Frank's sudden visit to his father, immediately after which the money was missing? Had not there been a report that the old gentleman was in difficulties, and might not his son have been tempted to help him, while what temptation *could* Lettice have? What *could* she have done with the money? Besides which, no girl could steal five hundred pounds, or even think of doing such a thing, and only a man could suspect her of it. Brian was considerably startled by his wife's suggestion about Frank's unexpected visit to the farm, immediately after he had received the money, and before it was missed; but he rallied himself, and, in answer to her last question, hinted at the fisherman. To which she only replied:

'No, Brian; you are under some delusion about that man. She loves her husband, and it is my belief she has never loved anybody else.'

'How can you tell?' said he discontentedly.

'I saw it in her eyes,' she replied, on which he laughed and kissed her.

As Brian Donolly could get no satisfaction from either his friend or his wife, he determined to take the bold step of writing to his *friend's wife*, and so trying a last chance, which he felt to be not only a last chance, but a very faint one. However, the

attempt could do no harm. It was possible that Lettice knew nothing of the five hundred pound note, or of Frank's situation. If so, his letter, if she were not altogether heartless, would shock her, and make her very miserable. That was a risk that Brian considered must be run, and he also considered that a little misery would possibly be very good for Lettice. It was more probable, however, that she knew all about it; but if so, the hearing it from a third person might shame her into rescuing Frank from his present dreadful situation if it was in her power to do so, or she might know of the loss of the note and not of the steps Frank had taken as soon as he was left alone. After much deliberation, Brian came to the conclusion that no harm could, and some good might, be done by writing to Lettice, and so he wrote to her.

She was in the dairy making up little pats of butter when the letter was brought to her, her sleeves tucked up above her pretty elbows, and a white apron of the old lady's shielding her dress. She was interested in her occupation, and pleased at her own success; but it was the third day after her arrival at the farm, and the second on which she had hoped every minute might bring her news of her husband. She was wearying for his presence, for a touch from his kind hand, or a loving word from his dear lips. She was a little pale, and there

was a wistful expression in her large loving eyes that they had never known before. When she saw the letter with the Clanmena postmark on it, but directed in a strange hand, she dropped the pats of butter and moulds in a medley on the floor, and rushing from the dairy to her own room, tore it open. She read as follows:—

‘DEAR MRS. TIPPINGTON,—You may be aware of the facts I am going to write to you about, and if so, you must excuse me for troubling you with this letter. If not, I think you ought to be informed of them. I was sent for to the Castle last night by Mr. Hope, and found that your husband had given himself up to justice for having made away with a five hundred pound note he had received from Mr. Hope. Mr. Hope had intended to give him fifty pounds only, and so had asked for it back again. He was inclined to think that Frank was accusing himself wrongly, and that his mind was affected; but it is clear to me that this is not the case. He has in some way lost the note, and he obstinately refuses to say how. He would have been put into the hands of the police and carried off to the county jail, only I went bail for his appearance at the Assizes, which take place in about a fortnight, when he will be tried. You had better not say anything about this to his parents.

If necessary, I will come over myself to break it to them.—Believe me, yours truly,

‘BRIAN DONOLLY.’

He purposely made his letter abrupt, and took no pains to soften the terrible news to her. He wanted to give her a shock, and to force her to save her husband, if it was in her power to do so, as he greatly suspected that it was.

Could he have seen the effect that this letter produced on Lettice, perhaps he would have pitied her, and repented, if not the writing to her at all, at least the not writing to her differently. The blow was almost more than the poor young creature could bear; the words burnt themselves into her brain as she read them. She staggered, reeled, and fell on the floor. She did not faint; she was not stunned; no merciful unconsciousness came to her relief. She saw, felt, understood it all; and thought had never been more vivid than as, physical force failing her, she fell, and lay there under the weight of the blow.

Frank giving himself up as a thief! Frank's character and prospects annihilated, and by her! She felt, rather than knew, what that character and those prospects were to him. Her intercourse with him had taught her, without words, that they were his life, that they were more than his life, to him; and for

her sake, to shield her, he had sacrificed everything, and she had ruined him.

Frank calling himself a thief! Frank a prisoner on bail! Frank to be tried at the next Assizes! It could not be! It was a dream! It was a lie! Alas! her reason told her that it was reality. What was to be done? What could she do? Not lie here helpless in her agony, but be up and acting.

Self-command was borne in upon her for the first time in her life. She must act for others, and not for one moment think of herself. She must not let the old parents know. She must control herself, and tell them Frank wanted her;—ah, *did* he want her?—and she must leave them calmly, without exciting their suspicions.

Love for Frank told her and taught her all this. Love was doing its purifying work in this young, frivolous heart. But how *could* she carry out her programme? How could she, undisciplined, selfish, with no mental habits to assist her, control her anguish, and act for others, not thinking of herself?

She knew not whence the impulse came; it was by no forethought or intention; but out of her heart, through silent lips, went up to Heaven the first intense, earnest, soul-felt prayer that she had ever known. It was not a prayer to be happy; it was not a prayer that things might end well; it was only a prayer for strength to play her part and do her duty.

And the strength came, that soothing influence that all who pray in earnest know so well ; that rest and comfort, which, as it enters the perturbed soul, seems like a miracle, for the first time in her life was known to Lettice. In that strength and not in her own, she went to her mother-in-law, and was able to command her features and her voice while she told her that Frank wanted her, and she must go home at once.

‘Frank wanted her!’ Yes, she felt certain that the words she spoke were strictly true. He wanted her, not only that she might take the blame of the lost note on herself, but because he was in trouble. He loved her, and she loved him ; so, being in trouble, he *must* want her.

‘For better, for worse, in sickness and in health ;’ Lettice had never thought of those words with any serious meaning before, but now they rang in her ears, and sounded through her brain. She knew not why she kept listening to them, but there they were. She hardly knew whence they came, even ; for they had made no impression on her when she spoke them to Frank in church, and in church heard his voice utter them. The *worse* of life seemed so far from her then ; trouble and sorrow were distant impossibilities, to which she never gave a thought ; while the idea that she could ever have to *comfort* her husband was one she never dreamt of. She

was to be his darling and his queen, and to float down a summer stream for ever, in sweet sunshine with purple silk sails.

And now in a few weeks it had come to this, and by her own follies, as even her hardly awakened conscience told her. She was banished from his home in dire disgrace ; they had parted on any but affectionate terms ; and he had given himself up to justice to be tried as a thief !

Poor Frank, and yet poorer Lettice, who felt herself the cause of all.

Old Mrs. Tippington was very sorry to part with her ; but if Frank wanted her, that was quite enough for her departure : a wife's proper place was by the side of her husband.

She kissed her very affectionately when she said good-bye, and Lettice was amazed to find herself on such good terms with Frank's mother ; and to feel her own heart warming towards one he loved so dearly was a new and strange pleasure. If there was much sorrow in life that had never entered her dreams, were there many sweetnesses also ?

She made her journey in a state of restless excitement that would have been intolerable but for the unknown and unsuspected strength that her prayer had brought her. Arrived at Clanmena, she had no doubt whatever as to where she should go and what she should do. It was not to the house

over the shop in the street towards which she bent her steps. It was not to Frank she dared go yet. No, there was something to be done first, before she could take her place by her husband.

She walked straight to the Castle, her rapid steps bearing her thither in a very short time, and then, without allowing herself a moment for her courage to evaporate, she rang the bell and asked for Mr. Hope.

How different were her feelings now from those of vanity and pleasure with which her former visit had been paid! It seemed to her a year ago since she had stood on the broad, handsome steps, happy, light-hearted, triumphant, yet timid, to pay Diana a visit in the schoolroom. Was her girlhood quite gone? Was she a woman now, and would that careless, light heart never again be hers?

She was shown into a room down-stairs, where the servant left her to wait while he told his master. It was not the grand butler who had impressed her formerly, but only a small insignificant boy in buttons.

As he left her, quite unable to contain the news with which he was bursting, he said :

‘It’s a square house any way, to-day. Miss Di has ’loped!’

The words fell with a shock on Lettice’s ears. She had really forgotten all about Diana Hope’s

elopement. So it was discovered, and perhaps her father would be so taken up with this event he would hardly think about his five hundred pound note. She wondered whether it *would* make any difference, and as she so wondered the door of the room opened, and Mr. Hope made his appearance.





CHAPTER XIX.

THE END.

MR. HOPE looked, or Lettice fancied he looked, pale and disturbed.

‘It is his daughter’s elopement,’ she thought; ‘but no one can pity him, when they remember the bad character and wooden legs.’

‘You wished to speak to me, Mrs. Tippington?’ said he.

‘I did,’ replied Lettice; and then to her surprise she found that her tongue clove to the roof of her mouth, and she could not utter another word.

Mr. Hope, however, spoke for her.

‘I had better tell you at once,’ he said, ‘that it is of no use whatever. You have come to plead for your husband, but I cannot listen to you; justice must have its course.’

There are, perhaps, no five consecutive words in

our language, that are ever used by respectable people, more inhuman or more unchristian than those five : 'Justice must have its course.'

Mr. Hope having uttered *them*, was capable of saying anything else of the same nature ; so he proceeded to inform Lettice that she had better go home at once to her husband, as her doing so would save her and Mr. Hope, both of them, useless pain.

'If you can use your influence to make him confess about it, then you will be doing some good,' he added almost roughly.

'Sure he has nothing to confess,' cried Lettice, trembling, but eager ; 'he knows nothing about it.'

'Yes, I daresay,' was the reply, given with polite irony ; 'at the same time, you may believe me, my advice is good, and the best thing you can do is to follow it.'

'It is you that does not understand,' she began, but was stopped by his look of blank amazement.

'I understand that I have had five hundred pounds stolen from me,' he replied quickly, 'and that I do not intend to let off the thief.'

She turned towards him as he said that, and advanced a step nearer.

'Take me, then,' she cried desperately ; 'I am the thief!'

He started back horror-struck, yet unbelieving.

'You?' he cried, his eyes fixed on her fresh, fair, innocent face. 'Don't say so; it is impossible!'

Lettice felt inclined to burst out crying, and restrained the inclination with the greatest difficulty. She hid her face in her hands, and having made her confession, had not another word to say.

'You mean to tell me that you stole my five hundred pound note?' he said at last, speaking slowly and even reluctantly; 'and that your husband gave himself up to shield you? Is that it?'

'I did not know it,' she cried; 'he sent me away. It is this minute only I came back. It was Mr. Donolly wrote to me.'

'And you stole my money?'

'No; I took it and'—

'Oh, I beg your pardon. I don't understand these nice distinctions, these refinements of language. You did not steal it, you only took it! And then, may I ask what you did with my money, after you so obligingly took it?'

'I gave it away,' replied she in a very low voice.

'Oh,' continued Mr. Hope, 'this is a nice story—a very nice story indeed. I am to understand that nobody stole my money, but that you *took* it, and were so very generous and kind as to give it to somebody who wanted it more than I did, I suppose?'

‘Will I never make you understand?’ cried Lettice, wringing her hands in despair. ‘You shall get it back again, very soon maybe. I thought it was fifty pounds.’

‘This is better and better,’ said he, cool and sarcastic as ever; ‘you *lent* it, then, and it will be returned to me, with interest I dare say, by and by? Just a business transaction of the simplest description. Perhaps you will add to all your other kindnesses by informing me who the third person in this little affair is? The money is mine,—you lend it,—and *who* receives it?’

‘It’s that I can’t tell you. I promised not.’

‘Now this is rather too much of a good thing, young woman; and if you expect me to let you off because you are pretty, let me tell you that you have mistaken the man you have to deal with. You lend my money to somebody, and promise him not to tell! Do you think I believe one word you’re saying? Your husband has sent you here with this cock-and-bull story, thinking I will let you off because of your pretty face; but I shall *not*. If your story was true, I’d have you taken up this minute, and you should be tried at the Assizes along with him.’

Lettice gave a little scream, and again hid her face in her hands, keeping back her tears with the utmost difficulty.

She looked so graceful and childish as she stood shrinking before him, and the extreme beauty of her face when visible had, of course (he being a man), made its impression upon him, so that now he began to think that it *would* be better to let her off, if she would only tell him the truth.

'If you will give up the name of the person you gave the money to, perhaps I may allow you to go home,' he said; 'if not, I must send for the police.'

'Don't, if you please,' she cried beseechingly; 'what good will it do you? Sure if I had the money, I'd give it back with all the pleasure in life. You'll be sorry when you know it all. It shall be sent you in a day or two. But I promised, and I can't break a promise. I thought I might, maybe, but old Mrs. Tippington says no one may, and she knows.'

'I am uncommonly obliged to old Mrs. Tippington, and to young Mrs. Tippington too, for that matter. Now I'll have no more of this nonsense. Did your husband send you here?'

'He did not. Sure how could he, when it's at the farm he thinks I am this minute?'

'You really came of yourself? And you really took the five hundred pound note?'

'I did; I thought it was fifty.'

'That I believe. You gave away my note, thinking it was fifty pounds, and that I should never

hear a word about it, and that your husband would be able to make it up before it was wanted?’

‘It was to be returned as soon as Dick—I mean in a day or two.’

‘Oh, you lent it to some one of the name of Dick? A little light begins to shine. An extravagant, dissipated brother’—

‘I have no brother,’ cried Lettice indignantly; ‘and if I had, it’s not extravagant or dissipated he’d be. And *you wished* for a son-in-law with a bad character and wooden legs!’

‘Are they both mad?’ thought Mr. Hope, quite taken aback by this last remark. He had seriously considered that the young bookseller was a monomaniac, and now, what could he think of his wife?

Lettice repented her hasty words as soon as uttered. ‘I beg your pardon,’ she said humbly; ‘and if you will only believe that you shall get the money back in a wee time, and just not mind for a day or two, Frank and I will be obliged to you for ever.’

He looked hard at her, and as he did so, he felt that he could not help believing her story, strange and foolish as that story was. And as he looked, he felt also how uncommonly lovely she was, and what a sweet, innocent, bewitching face she had.

He addressed her in a kinder manner than he had yet used.

‘Take my advice,’ he said, ‘and tell me the truth.’

Believe me, it is your duty to do so, and it is the only chance for you or for your husband either. Who did you give the note to? Tell me that, and all may be well still; and there is no use in your silence, because it must all come out at the trial in ten days, and that in the most public manner, and when you will, both of you, be covered with disgrace.'

'Do you think I'm not wishing to tell you?' replied Lettice almost indignantly. 'Isn't the name on the very tip of my tongue, with only the promise to keep it back? But I promised, and I can't. The old lady says I can't—did not I say so?'

Mr. Hope rang the bell.

'Then I shall send for the police.'

'Don't, if you please,' she cried in an agony; 'it's yourself will get the money in a day or two, and then you'll be sorry.'

The servant who answered the bell brought a letter on a silver waiter and handed it to Mr. Hope, who took it mechanically, speaking as he did so:

'Send Corny into Clanmena for'— Here he paused abruptly, changed countenance, and tore open the letter, just saying to the man, 'You can go,' who obeyed in surprised silence.

He read with knit brows and darkened face, and as he read he suddenly looked keenly at Lettice.

'What's this?' he said, and then he read on and finished the letter.

‘Is it? Has she?’ cried the girl, breathless with excitement.

This was the letter that had been brought to Mr. Hope, and which he was now reading before her eyes:—

‘DEAR PAPA,—My husband and I will be nearly at Rome before you get this little letter. We are as happy as two doves, thank you, and much jollier. Tell little Doe it’s awful fun to be married.—Yours affectionately,

‘DIANA HARRINGTON.

‘P.S.—I’m shocked at your carelessness, and you so old! Mrs. Tippington gave me your fifty pound note, I promising to stump up in a day or two; but I couldn’t think of such a thing with five hundred. I’m not *that* extravagant, I hope. Thanks for the nice little tip, which enables Dick to do the thing handsomely and keep up the credit of ould Ireland in foreign parts. He bids me say with his love that a similar favour will be acceptable in about six weeks.’

Mr. Hope put this letter in his pocket, with a paler and sadder face than when he opened it.

‘So, he said slowly, his eyes fixed on Lettice; ‘so the mystery is explained; it was to my daughter you gave the money?’

Lettice almost broke down in the irrepressible relief of that moment. She longed to give way to hysterical weeping, and felt as if the restraint she had put on herself *could* not be preserved many minutes longer; but the sight of that stern white man renewed the power of self-control within her.

'Has she paid you?' she asked in a very low voice.

'Paid me!' he replied scornfully. 'Do you think an undutiful daughter would have that much honesty in her? Let me tell you something, young lady. I hope you have had a lesson. You see into what trouble that which I daresay you thought a very little error has led you. You have nearly ruined your husband, nearly destroyed his character and all his prospects in life, and nearly broken his heart, which I believe to be a very honest one.'

Here Lettice, unable under the dreadful words to command herself any longer, suddenly burst out crying, and wept just as bitterly as if she had done all these things quite, instead of nearly.

'And let me tell you something more, young lady,' continued he, raising his voice. 'You think to have stolen that note would have been a crime, and you consider yourself innocent because you did not mean to steal it; but in my eyes you are a far greater sinner for having assisted a child to cheat

her father, and a maiden to run away clandestinely from her home with a man of infamous character, than many a thief in the dock who gets his seven years' penal servitude for his offence. You escape unpunished, but you are a greater sinner than he!' with which words Mr. Hope opened the door of the room and desired Lettice to leave him, who, shocked and conscience-stricken, went weeping on her way.

Up to that very moment Lettice had felt that if she could only explain the circumstances under which she had taken the fifty pound note (as she believed it to be), she would be at once exonerated from blame. She had never been accustomed to judge anything or any one by strict rules or high standards, and she had expected to escape with the lightest possible censure for what she had done; but as Mr. Hope spoke, her eyes were suddenly opened, and, like Adam and Eve, she was ashamed. For the first time in her life, she really knew good from evil.

This change, which appeared to her sudden, because she became consciously aware of it in one of those wonderful moments in which consciousness is borne in on every life, had, in reality, been gradual.

Daily intercourse with a mind like her husband's, influenced by high principles, of which she, poor

child, knew nothing before her marriage ; the new fact, that such people as the Donollys were to be liked and admired, not laughed at and condemned ; the very different atmosphere, in fact, in which she had been living, had all been working an effect on her youthful and plastic mind, though unguessed by herself or those about her, just as tonics and food restore the body, till, from a sickly condition, it becomes in good sound health, we do not know how. Her antagonism, however marked, to all that was new and unlike her former life, was chiefly on the surface, and a gradual change was being worked underneath that surface, which she was quite unaware of herself. Then came the shock of Frank's sending her away, the farm influences, which affected her far more than they would have done but for that unsuspected change, and the tenor of Brian Donolly's letter awaking in her the power of prayer,—all united to bring about this awakening, which seemed to her at the moment to be caused entirely by Mr. Hope's cruel words.

The foundation of all the good in Lettice was the true love she bore her husband ; amid all the weeds of vanity and folly, that fair flower flourished with its eternal blossom. It was *that* which had opened her mind to good influences, and which, I believe, without these startling lessons, would have purified and saved her.

And so poor Lettice retraced her steps from the Castle, running rather than walking; and a very different Lettice it was that returned to her husband from the one he had sent away from him three days before.

He was pacing rapidly up and down their little drawing-room when she entered it. He looked so pale, so haggard, so careworn, so unlike her own Frank, that, at the sight of him, the penitence with which Lettice's heart was full overflowed with painful vehemence.

She sprang forward and flung her arms round him.

'I love you so,' was all she said as she hid her face on his breast and burst into an actual passion of weeping.

It was not in the heart of man not to clasp the fair crying creature to him, and for one brief, joyful moment forget what had passed, and implicitly believe those ardent words of love. But the next instant memory resumed its sway, and Frank gently but firmly put Lettice from him.

She had not said 'love me,' as she would have done a little while ago, when self was the pre-eminent object of her life. It was her love for him that found expression, because it was of him she was thinking, not of herself; and this change made an impression on his mind, though he did not consciously recognise it.

'You love *me*, Lettice?' he said very gravely; 'and that man'—

'What man?' she replied, astonished.

'Had you not known him before we married?' asked her husband.

'Who are you meaning at all?' was his wife's reply.

She looked so innocent, with her sweet face still wet with the tears she had shed, and her eyes full of love for him, that Frank felt ashamed of the suspicion that she had ever cared for any one else.

'Why have you come back?' he said at last; 'what does it mean?'

'Sure, it's all right, dear,' she replied, 'if you'll only forgive me. It was Miss Diana Hope took the money to run away with; and now she's told her papa, and nobody's to blame at all.'

That the mystery of the lost note was cleared up, was all the meaning that Frank took in from this not very lucid speech. He had already in his own heart acquitted Lettice of anything wrong, as far as the fisherman was concerned; and now he found that he himself no longer lay under the dreadful suspicion of theft, no longer need look forward to the horrors of a trial, that his character was saved and his ruin unaccomplished. Lettice's appearance had brought the colour into his cheeks; but it faded away again and left him deadly pale, while he

staggered and would have fallen but for the loving arms which were again thrown round him, and which tenderly helped him into a chair.

Frank held her tightly, as if afraid to let her go, leant his head on her shoulder, and burst into tears ; and Lettice was not frightened at his emotions, because she was thinking of him so much more than she was of herself ; so she was able to comfort and soothe him, till he dashed the tears almost indignantly away, and looked up smiling in her face.

After that the husband and wife had a long conversation, in which Frank learned exactly all that Lettice had done, and also all that she had not done. He could not blame her faults more strongly than she blamed them herself ; and he was so delighted to find that she was his own Lettice, and had never cared for any man but himself, that he was in danger of making light of the many serious errors that she in reality had committed.

But in one so well brought up and so high principled as Frank, this danger could only be in the first happiness of reconciliation, and afterwards many serious words were exchanged between him and Lettice as to the real bearing of her conduct.

It was from seeing how unaffectedly shocked Frank was, that she clearly saw the sin of assisting Miss Diana Hope, first in her clandestine correspondence with a lover, and afterwards in her

elopement. The romance and excitement had entirely blinded her to anything else, and it was only when she understood what Frank felt that she began to feel it herself.

He spoke to her of her own deceit, of the actual falsehoods she had told him, and of the yet deeper deceitfulness that Diana must have practised for a yet longer time, and he gently pointed out how impossible it was for an affair of this kind to be carried on without a terrible amount of falseness. He spoke of Diana's disobedience to her father, and Lettice's failure in duty to her husband, and with many tears and many good resolutions, she owned that all he said was right and true.

When she faltered out something about the want of character and legs in the man to whom Mr. Hope would have married his daughter, it was only to be shown the fallacy of this last excuse. The lover from whom Diana fled was in reality a gentleman who had been encouraged by herself as well as by her father, and who possessed a good reputation, and the ordinary number of limbs.

It was a great satisfaction to Frank to be able to explain to Brian Donolly what the intercourse between Lettice and the fisherman had really been ; but he gave as slight a sketch as he could of the rest of the story, and felt keen shame on Lettice's account in giving even that.

Brian congratulated his friend warmly on his happy advent out of all his difficulties ; but in his inmost heart his self-congratulations were warmer still, that *he* possessed such a wife as Mary instead of such a one as Lettice.

It must not be supposed that after all this Lettice and Frank trod at once on a path of roses. This was very far indeed from being the case.

Mr. Hope could not forgive Lettice for the part she had acted, and withdrew his custom from her husband ; and the withdrawal of the great man's custom is a serious thing to a young and rising tradesman, entailing as it does many annoyances and many other losses, besides the loss that it is in itself.

Frank was often vexed and often disheartened ; nor could he always forget that Lettice was the cause of his troubles—a fact she never ceased to recall with true penitence and grief. Nor was Lettice herself reformed all at once from the follies and frivolities of a lifetime. She often fell back into them, and often did not remember that they were follies and frivolities at all. Her temper would escape from control, and her indolent careless habits took a long time to conquer.

It was a second lesson, almost as severe and as salutary as the first, when she found what a very unhappy marriage Diana Hope had made, how

bitterly she regretted it, and how she blamed Lettice, who, unblinded by passion, assisted her to the consummation of her unhappiness.

But Frank did live down the trials and difficulties of his position, and Lettice did become all that a man could wish his wife to be.

At first she was anxious, eager, longing to be a helpmeet to him ; and through the sincerity of her repentance, the trueness of her love, and that power of prayer born in a moment of adversity, but never leaving her afterwards, she became one indeed.

Her acquaintance with Mary Donolly ripened into friendship, and the two girls spent many pleasant hours together, when their husbands were employed in their business. Mary had always seen the real good that lay at the bottom of Lettice's foolish little heart, and, lighted by the radiance of her own love, had detected Lettice's in her eyes. She scolded Brian for being less believing, and felt real triumph on the day when she informed him—we will leave it to the imagination of the reader to say how soon or how long after the events narrated in these pages—that Mrs. Frank Tippington had herself laughed at the idea of being GENTEEL.

**MORRISON AND GIBB, EDINBURGH,
PRINTERS TO HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE.**

**A CATALOGUE OF
NEW & POPULAR WORKS,**

AND OF BOOKS

FOR CHILDREN,

SUITABLE FOR PRESENTS AND SCHOOL PRIZES.



PUBLISHED BY

GRIFFITH AND FARRAN,

(SUCCESSORS TO NEWBERRY AND HARRIS),

WEST CORNER OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD, LONDON.

E. P. DUTTON AND CO., NEW YORK.

5M. 4.80.

Cancelling all previous Editions of this Catalogue.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
New Books and New Editions, 1879—80	3
New Fiction	4
Standard Works	5
Stanesby's Illuminated Gift Books	7
Poetry	8
Birthday Books... ..	8
Manuals on Confirmation, &c.	8
New Books and New Editions for Children... ..	9
Six Shilling Books	12
Five Shilling Books	13
Four and Sixpenny Books	14
Three and Sixpenny Books	15
Three Shilling Books	19
Two and Sixpenny Books	20
Two Shilling Books	23
One and Sixpenny Books	24
One Shilling Books	26
The Favourite Library	26
Durable Nursery Books	27
Works for Distribution	28
Educational Works	29

NEW BOOKS AND NEW EDITIONS.

EIGHT MONTHS IN AN OX-WAGGON:

Reminiscences of Boer Life. By EDWARD F. SANDEMAN.
Demy 8vo., cloth, with a Map, 15s.

TRAVEL, WAR, AND SHIPWRECK.

By COLONEL W. PARKER GILLMORE ("UBIQUE,") Author of
"The Great Thirst Land," &c. Demy 8vo. 9s.

POLITICIANS OF TO-DAY. A Series

of Personal Sketches. By T. WEMYSS REID, Author of
"Charlotte Brontë; a Monograph." Cabinet Portraits, &c.
Two Vols., Crown 8vo., cloth, 15s.

RECORDS OF YORK CASTLE, FORT-

ress, Court House, and Prison. By A. W. TWYFORD (the
present Governor) and Major ARTHUR GRIFFITHS, author of
"The Memorials of Millbank." Crown 8vo. With Engravings
and Photographs. 7s. 6d.

L'ABÉCÉDAIRE OF FRENCH PRONUN-

ciation. A Manual for Teachers and Students. By G. LEPRÉVOST,
of Paris, Professor of Languages. Crown 8vo., cloth, 2s.

THE BIRTHDAY BOOK OF QUOTATIONS

and Autograph Album. Extracts in English, French, and
German, chiefly from standard authors. With Calendar, Or-
namental Borders for Photographs, Album for Translations,
and Chosen Mottoes. Extra cloth and gilt, price 10s. 6d.

FIFTY YEARS IN SANDBOURNE. A

Sketch by CECILIA LUSHINGTON. Fcap. 8vo., cloth, 1s. 6d.

AMBITION'S DREAM. A Poem in two

fyttes. New Edition. Fcap. 8vo., cloth, 2s. 6d.

THE ROYAL UMBRELLA. By MAJOR A. F. P.

HARCOURT, author of "The Shakespeare Argosy," &c., &c.
With four full-page Illustrations by LINLEY SAMBOURNE.
Small crown 8vo., cloth elegant, 4s. 6d.

CREWEL WORK. Fifteen designs in Bold

and Conventional Character, capable of being quickly and
easily worked. With complete instructions. By ZETA, Author
of "Ladies Work and How to Sell it," and including Patterns
for Counterpanes, Bed Hangings, Curtains, Furniture Covers,
Chimney-piece Borders, Piano Backs, Table Cloths, Table
Covers, &c., &c. Demy. In an Envelope, price 2s. 6d.

NEW FICTION.

WORTHLESS LAURELS. By EMILY CARRINGTON. Three volumes crown 8vo. 31s. 6d.

LOUIS: or, Doomed to the Cloister. A Tale of Religious Life in the time of Louis XIV. Founded on Fact. By M. J. HOFFE. Dedicated by permission to Dean Stanley. Three volumes, crown 8vo., 31s. 6d.

TRIED BY FIRE. By FRANCIS CARR, Author of "Left Alone," &c. Three vols., Crown 8vo., 31s. 6d.

FOR A DREAM'S SAKE. By Mrs. HERBERT MARTIN, Author of "Bonnie Lesley," &c. Two vols., Crown 8vo., cloth, 21s.

THE SECRET OF THE SANDS; or, The Water Lily and her Crew. A Nautical Novel. By HARRY COLLINGWOOD. Two vols., Cr. 8vo., cloth, gilt tops, price 12s.

STORIES FOR DAUGHTERS AT HOME.

STEPHEN THE SCHOOLMASTER. A story without plot. By Mrs. GELLIE (M. E. B.) Cr. 8vo., 5s.

MY SISTER'S KEEPER: A Story for Girls. In one vol. By LAURA M. LANE, Author of "Gentleman Verschoylo," &c. With a Preface by Mrs. TOWNSEND, President of the Girls' Friendly Society. Cloth, price 5s.

MY MOTHER'S DIAMONDS. By Maria J. GREER. With a Frontispiece by A. LUDOVICI. Cloth, price 5s.

"BONNIE LESLEY." By Mrs. Herbert MARTIN, Author of "Cast Adrift, &c." With Frontispiece by Miss C. PATERSON. Cloth, price 5s.

LEFT ALONE; or, The Fortunes of Phillis Maitland. By FRANCIS CARR, Author of "Not Lancelot, nor another," &c. Cloth, price 5s.

ST. NICOLAS' EVE and other Tales. By MARY C. ROWSELL. Crown 8vo. Price 7s. 6d.

PICTURES OF THE PAST: Memories of Men I Have Met, and Sights I Have Seen. By FRANÇOIS H. GRUNDRY, C.E. One vol., Crown 8vo., cloth., price 12s.

Contains personal recollections of Patrick Branwell Brontë, Leigh Hunt and his family, George Henry Lewes, George Parker Bidder, George Stephenson, and many other celebrities, and gives besides descriptions of very varied experiences in Australia.

AMONG THE ZULUS: The Adventures of Hans Sterk in South Africa. By Lieut.-Col. A. W. DRAYSON, R.A. Crown 8vo., illustrated, paper boards, price 2s. 6d. cloth, gilt edges, price 3s. 6d.

STORIES from EARLY ENGLISH LITERATURE, with some Account of the Origin of Fairy Tales, Legends and Traditionary Lore. Adapted to the use of Young Students. By Miss S. J. VENABLES DODDS. Cr. 8vo., price 5s.

THE LIFE MILITANT: Plain Sermons for Cottage Homes. By ELLELL. Crown 8vo., price 6s.

HOFER: A Drama. By CATHERINE SWANWICK. Demy 8vo., cloth, gilt edges, price 3s. 6d.

HISTORICAL SKETCHES OF THE REFORMATION. By the Rev. FREDERICK GEO. LEE, D.C.L., Vicar of All Saints, Lambeth, &c., &c., &c. One Volume, post octavo, 10s. 6d. cloth.

THE COMMERCIAL PRODUCTS OF THE SEA; or, Marine Contributions to Industry and Art. By P. L. SIMMONDS, Author of "The Commercial Products of the Vegetable Kingdom." One vol., with numerous Illustrations, 16s.

A GLOSSARY OF BIOLOGICAL, ANATOMICAL, AND PHYSIOLOGICAL TERMS, for Teachers and Students in Schools and Classes connected with the Science and Art Department, and other Examining bodies. By THOMAS DUNMAN, Physiology Lecturer at the Birkbeck Institution and the Working Men's College. Crown 8vo., cloth 2s. 6d.

THE CRIMEAN CAMPAIGN WITH THE CONNAUGHT RANGERS, 1854-55-56. By Lieut.-Colonel NATHANIEL STEEVENS, late 88th (Connaught Rangers). One volume, Demy 8vo., with Map, Scarlet Cloth, 15s.

"A welcome addition to the military history of England."—

United Service Gazette.

CHILD LIFE IN JAPAN, and Japanese

Child Stories. By M. CHAPLIN AYTON (Bachelier-ès-Lettres, et Bachelier-ès-Sciences, Paris, Civis Academiæ Edinensis, and Elève de la Faculté de Médecine de Paris). With Seven full-page Illustrations, drawn and engraved by Japanese artists, and many smaller ones. Quarto, Cloth elegant, price 10s. 6d.

"People who give it away are likely to be tempted to buy a new copy to keep."—*Saturday Review*.

MEMORABLE BATTLES IN ENGLISH

HISTORY: The Military Lives of the Commanders. By W. H. DAVENPORT ADAMS. New and thoroughly Revised Edition. With Frontispiece and Plans of Battles. Two vols., Crown 8vo., Cloth. Price 16s.

"The materials for these two volumes have been carefully collected and the best authorities consulted, while the narrative is spirited, vigorous, and clear."—*Spectator*.

OCEAN AND HER RULERS: A Narrative

of the Nations which have from the Earliest Ages held Dominion over the Sea, comprising a Brief History of Navigation from the Remotest Periods up to the Present Time. By ALFRED ELWES. New, Enlarged, and thoroughly Revised Edition, with 16 Illustrations by WALTER W. MAY. Crown 8vo. Price 9s.

MASTERPIECES OF ANTIQUE ART.

From the celebrated collections in the Vatican, the Louvre, and the British Museum. By STEPHEN THOMPSON, Author of "Old English Homes," "Old Masters," &c. Twenty-five Examples in Permanent Photography. Super-Royal Quarto. Elegantly bound, price £2 2s.

WORKS BY JOHN TIMBS, F.S.A.

Notabilia, or CURIOUS AND AMUSING FACTS ABOUT MANY THINGS.

Explained and Illustrated by JOHN TIMBS, F.S.A. Post 8vo, 6s.

"There is a world of wisdom in this book."—*Art Journal*.

Ancestral Stories and Traditions of Great Families. Illustrative

of English History. With Frontispiece. Post 8vo, price 7s. 6d.

"An interesting and well written book."—*Literary Churchman*.

Strange Stories of the Animal World. A Book of Curious Con-

tributions to Natural History. Illustrations by ZWICKER.

Second Edition. Post 8vo, gilt edges, price 6s.

"Will be studied with profit and pleasure."—*Athenæum*.

Caxton's Fifteen O's and other Prayers. Printed by command

of the Princess Elizabeth, Queen of England and France, and also of our Sovereign Lord the King. By WM. CAXTON. Reproduced in Photo-Lithography by S. Ayling. Quarto, bound in parchment. New and cheaper edition, price 6s.

The Day Dreams of a Sleepless Man: being a series of Papers contributed to the *Standard*, by FRANK IVES SOUDAMORE, Esq., C.B. Post 8vo, price 3s. 6d.

"Decidedly clever and full of good humour."—*Graphic*.

Mission from Cape Coast Castle to Ashantee. WITH A DESCRIPTIVE ACCOUNT OF THAT KINGDOM. By the late T. EDWARD BOWDICH, Esq. New Edition, with preface by his daughter, Mrs. HALE. With map of the route to Coomassie. Post 8vo. Price 5s.

Joan of Arc and the Times of Charles the Seventh. By Mrs. BRAY, Author of "Life of Stothard," etc. Post 8vo, price 7s. 6d.

"Readers will rise from its perusal, not only with increased information, but with sympathies awakened and elevated."—*Times*.

The Good St. Louis and His Times. By Mrs. BRAY. With Portrait. Post 8vo, price 7s. 6d.

"A valuable and interesting record of Louis' reign."—*Spectator*.

Sagas from the Far East, or KALMOUK AND MONGOLIAN TALES. With Historical Preface and Explanatory Notes by the Author of "Patrañas," etc. Post 8vo, price 9s.

The Vicar of Wakefield; a Tale by OLIVER GOLDSMITH. With eight Illustrations by JOHN ABSOLON. Beautifully printed by Whittingham. 3s. 6d. cloth; 10s. 6d. morocco antique.

STANESBY'S ILLUMINATED GIFT BOOKS.

Every page richly printed in Gold and Colours.

The Bridal Souvenir. New Edition, with a Portrait of the Princess Royal. Elegantly bound in white morocco, price 21s.

"A splendid specimen of decorative art, and well suited for a bridal gift."

The Birth-Day Souvenir. A Book of Thoughts on Life and Immortality. Price 12s. 6d. cloth; 18s. morocco antique.

Light for the Path of Life; from the Holy Scriptures. Small 4to, price 12s. cloth; 15s. calf, gilt edges; 18s. morocco antique.

The Wisdom of Solomon; from the Book of Proverbs. Small 4to, price 14s. cloth elegant; 18s. calf; 21s. morocco antique.

The Floral Gift. Price 14s. cloth elegant; 21s. morocco extra.

Shakespeare's Household Words. With a Photograph of the Monument at Stratford-on-Avon. New and Cheaper Edition, Price 6s. cloth elegant; 10s. 6d. morocco antique.

Aphorisms of the Wise and Good. With a Photographic Portrait of Milton. Price 6s. cloth elegant; 10s. 6d. Morocco antique.

POETRY.

Poems. By E. L. FLOYER. Fcap. 8vo, price 2s. 6d.

The Seasons; a Poem by the Rev. O. RAYMOND, LL.B. Fcap. 8vo, with Four Illustrations. Price 2s. 6d.

THREE BIRTHDAY BOOKS.

I. The Book of Remembrance for every Day in the Year. With blank space for recording Birthdays, Weddings, &c., &c. Beautifully printed in red and black. Imp. 32mo., prices from 2s. upwards. Or with photographs, from 5s.

. *May also be had in various leather Bindings.*

II. The Churchman's Daily Remembrancer. With Poetical Selections for the Christian Year, with Calendar and Table of Lessons of the English Church, for the use of both Clergy and Laity. Cloth elegant, price 2s.; or with Photographs, cloth elegant, 4s.

. *May also be had in various leather Bindings.*

III. The Anniversary Text Book of Scripture Verse and Sacred Song for Every Day in the Year. Cloth, 1s.; or, gilt edges, 1s. 6d.

. *May also be had in various leather Bindings.*

Emblems of Christian Life. Illustrated by W. HARRY ROGERS, in One Hundred Original Designs, from the Writings of the Fathers, Old English Poets, &c. Printed by Whittingham, with Borders and Initials in Red. Square 8vo. price 10s. 6d. cloth elegant, gilt edges; 21s. Turkey morocco antique.

Bishop Ken's Approach to the Holy Altar. With an Address to Young Communicants. Limp Cloth, 8d.; superior cloth, red edges, 1s.; with Photographs 2s. extra.

. *May also be had in various leather Bindings.*

. Clergymen wishing to introduce this Manual can have specimen copy, with prices for quantities, post free for six stamps, on application.

Confirmation; or Called, and Chosen, and Faithful. By the Author of "The Gospel in the Church's Seasons" series. With a 'Preface by The Very Reverend the DEAN OF CHESTER. Fcap. 8vo., Cloth, 1s.

A cheaper edition for distribution, price 9d.

An Illuminated Certificate of Confirmation and First Communion. Price 2d.

A New "In Memoriam" Card. Printed in silver or gold. Price 2d.

. *A reduction made on taking a quantity of the above cards.*

**NEW BOOKS FOR CHILDREN
AND NEW EDITIONS OF OLD FAVOURITES.**

THE FAVOURITE PICTURE BOOK, and
Nursery Companion. Compiled anew by **UNCLE CHARLIE**.
With four hundred and fifty Illustrations by **ABSOLON, ANELAY,**
BENNETT, BROWNE (PHIZ), SIR JOHN GILBERT, T. LANDSEER,
LEECH, PROUT, HARRISON WEIR, and others. Medium 4to,
cloth elegant, price 5s., or coloured Illustrations, gilt edges,
10s. 6d.

*Also published in the following four parts, price One Shilling each,
or coloured Illustrations, 2s. :-*

THE PICTURESQUE PRIMER.	EASY READING FOR LITTLE READERS.
FRAGMENTS OF KNOWLEDGE FOR	THE NURSERY COMPANION.
LITTLE FOLK.	

Each in an attractive Paper Cover.

**GOLDEN THREADS FROM AN ANCIENT
LOOM; *Das Nibelungenlied*** adapted to the use of Young
Readers. By **LYDIA HANDS**. Dedicated by permission to
THOMAS CARLYLE. With Fourteen Wood Engravings by
J. SCHNORR, of Carolsfeld. Royal 4to. Price 10s. 6d.

THE BIRD AND INSECTS POST OFFICE.
By **ROBERT BLOOMFIELD**, Author of "The Farmer's Boy."
Illustrated with Thirty-five Wood Engravings. Crown 4to. 6s.

MODEL YACHTS and Model Yacht Sailing.
How to Build, Rig, and Sail a self-acting model Yacht. By
JAS. E. WALTON, V.M.Y.C. Fcap. 4to, 58 Woodcuts. Cloth,
2s. 6d.

THE ENGLISH STRUWWELPETER; or,
Pretty Stories and Funny Pictures for Little Children. After
the celebrated German Work, Dr. **HEINRICH HOFFMANN**.
Twenty-sixth Edition. Twenty-four pages of Illustrations.
Paper Boards, 4to. Price 2s. 6d.; or mounted on Linen, 5s.

**LITTLE MARGARET'S RIDE TO THE
ISLE OF WIGHT; or the Wonderful Rocking Horse.** By
Mrs. **FREDERICK BROWN**. Eight Illustrations in chromolitho-
graphy by her sister, **HELEN S. TATHAM**. Cr. 4to., cloth, 3s. 6d.

THE YOUNG VOCALIST: A collection of
Twelve Songs, each with an Accompaniment for the Piano-
forte. By Mrs. **MOUNSEY BARTHOLOMEW**. New and cheaper
Edition. Sewed, price 1s., or cloth limp, price 2s.

THE LITTLE PILGRIM. Revised and Illustrated by HELEN PETRIE. Cloth, 2s. 6d.

HAND SHADOWS to be thrown upon the Wall. Novel and amusing figures formed by the hand. By HENRY BURSILL. New and cheaper edition. Twelfth Thousand. Two series in one, price 1s. Crown 4to. Or coloured Illustrations, price 1s. 6d.

THE YOUNG BUGLERS: A Tale of the Peninsular War. By G. A. HENTY, Author of "Out on the Pampas," &c. With Eight full-page pictures by J. PROCTOR, and numerous plans of Battles. Large Crown 8vo, 7s. 6d.

WORKMAN AND SOLDIER. A Tale of Paris Life during the Siege and the rule of the Commune. By JAMES F. COBB, Author of "Silent Jim," "Watchers on the Long-ships," &c. With Illustrations and a Frontispiece by HARRY FURNISS. Crown 8vo, 5s. or bevelled boards, gilt edges, 6s.

THE MEN OF THE BACKWOODS: or, Stories and Sketches of the Indians and the Indian Fighters. By ASCOTT R. HOPE, author of "Heroes of Young America," &c., &c. Thirty-three Illustrations by C. O. MURRAY. Crown 8vo. Price 7s. 6d.

WILL WEATHERHELM: or, the Yarn of an Old Sailor about his Early Life and Adventures. By W. H. G. KINGSTON. Illustrated by W. W. MAY and G. H. THOMAS. New and Enlarged Edition. Imperial 16mo. Price 6s.; or bevelled boards, gilt edges, 7s. 6d.

CORNERTOWN CHRONICLES. New Legends of Old Lore written for the young. By KATHLEEN KNOX, author of "Queen Dora," &c. Crown 8vo., fully Illustrated by H. J. DAKIN. Price 4s. 6d., gilt edges, 5s.

SILVER LININGS: or, Light and Shade. By Mrs. REGINALD M. BRAY, author of "Ten of Them," &c. Illustrations by A. H. COLLINS. Cr. 8vo. 4s. 6d., gilt edges, 5s.

SILLY PETER; A Queer Story of a Daft Boy, a Prince, and a Miller's Daughter. By W. NORRIS. Illustrated. Crown 8vo. Price 2s. 6d.

KITTY AND BO: or the Story of a very little Girl and Boy. By A. T. Crown 8vo. illustrated, cloth, 2s. 6d.

BUNCHY: or, The Children of Scarsbrook Farm. By Miss E. C. PHILLIPS, author of "The Orphans," &c. Illustrations by A. J. JOHNSON. Crown 8vo. 2s. 6d.

WAYS AND TRICKS OF ANIMALS, with Stories about Aunt Mary's Pets. By MARY HOOPER, author of "Wives and Housewives," "Little Dinners," &c. With Twenty-three full-page Illustrations. Crown 8vo. 2s. 6d.

AFRICAN PETS: or, Chats about our Animal Friends in Natal, with a Sketch of Kaffir Life. By F. CLINTON PARRY. Illustrated by R. H. MOORE. Cr. 8vo. 2s. 6d.

ON THE LEADS: or what the Planets saw. Written and Illustrated by Mrs. A. A. STRANGE BUTSON. Crown 8vo., cloth, 2s. 6d.

A NEW ONE SHILLING SERIES.

WRECKED, NOT LOST: or, the Pilot and his Companion. By the Hon. Mrs. DUNDAS. Illustrated. New and cheaper edition. Fifth Thousand. Fcap. 8vo., price 1s.

AMONG THE BRIGANDS, and other Tales of Adventure. Illustrated. New and cheaper edition. Fourth Thousand. Fcap. 8vo., price 1s.

CHRISTIAN ELLIOTT: or, Mrs. Danvers' Prize. By L. N. COMYN. Illustrated. New and cheaper edition. Fourth Thousand. Fcap. 8vo., 1s.

FAVOURITE LIBRARY.

Volumes. Medium 16mo., price 1s. each.

For complete List of Series, see page 26.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS: or, Brothers and Sisters at Home. By EMMA DAVENPORT. Illustrated. New and cheaper edition. Fourth Thousand. Fcap. 8vo., 1s. 6d.

ADVENTURES IN AUSTRALIA: or, the Wanderings of Captain Spencer in the Bush and the Wilds. By Mrs. R. LEE. New and revised edition. Illustrated. Sixth Thousand. 3s. 6d., gilt edges, 4s.

A WORD TO THE WISE: or, Hints on the Current Improperities of Expression in Writing and Speaking. By PARRY GWYNNE. Sixteenth Thousand, revised. 18mo., price 6d., sewed; or 1s. cloth, gilt edges.

HARRY HAWKINS'S H-BOOK; showing how he learned to aspirate his H's. Eighth Thousand. 18mo. Uniform with "A Word to the Wise." Price 6d.

Six Shillings each, cloth elegant, with Illustrations.

- * **Kingston's (W. H. G.) Will Weatherhelm: OR, THE YARN OF AN OLD SAILOR ABOUT HIS EARLY LIFE AND ADVENTURES.**
- * " **The Missing Ship, OR NOTES FROM THE LOG OF THE "OUZEL GALLEY."**
- * " **The Three Admirals, AND THE ADVENTURES OF THEIR YOUNG FOLLOWERS.**
- * " **The Three Lieutenants; or, NAVAL LIFE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.**
- * " **The Three Commanders; OR, ACTIVE SERVICE AFLOAT IN MODERN TIMES.**
- * " **The Three Midshipmen. New Edition, with 24 Illustrations by G. THOMAS, PORTCH, etc.**
- * " **Hurricane Harry, OR THE ADVENTURES OF A NAVAL OFFICER DURING THE AMERICAN WAR OF INDEPENDENCE.**
- * " **True Blue; or, The Life and Adventures of a British SEAMAN OF THE OLD SCHOOL.**

Ice Maiden AND OTHER STORIES. By HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN. 89 Illustrations by ZWECKER. 4to., Gilt edges.

* **Journey to the Centre of the Earth.** Authorized Translation. From the French of JULES VERNE. With 53 Illustrations.

The Bird and Insects Post Office. By ROBERT BLOOMFIELD. Illustrated with Thirty-five Illustrations. Crown 4to.

Little Maids. Rhymes with Illustrations by Mrs. W. KEMP. Quarto, gilt edges.

*The Books marked * may be had with bevelled boards, gilt edges, price 7s. 6d.*

Five Shillings each, cloth elegant; or Five Shillings and Sixpence, gilt edges. Illustrated by eminent Artists.

Chums: A Story for the Youngsters, of Schoolboy Life and Adventure. By HARLEIGH SEVERNE.

Early Start in Life (The). By EMILIA MARRYAT NORRIS.

Gentleman Cadet (The): HIS CAREER AND ADVENTURES AT THE ROYAL ACADEMY, WOOLWICH. By LIEUT.-COLONEL DRAYSON.

Gerald and Harry, OR THE BOYS IN THE NORTH. By EMILIA MARRYAT NORRIS.

Five Shillings each—continued.

Hair-Breadth Escapes, or THE ADVENTURES OF THREE BOYS IN SOUTH AFRICA. By the Rev. H. C. ADAMS.

Heroes of the Crusades. By BARBARA HUTTON.

Home Life in the Highlands. By LILIAS GRAEME.

Household Stories from the land of Hofer, or POPULAR MYTHS OF TIROL, INCLUDING THE ROSE GARDEN OF KING LARYN.

Kingston's (W. H. G.) John Deane of Nottingham, HIS ADVENTURES AND EXPLOITS.

„ **Rival Crusoes (The).** (*Or bevelled boards, gilt edges, 6s.*)

Out on the Pampas, or THE YOUNG SETTLERS. By G. A. HENTY.

Patrañas, or SPANISH STORIES, LEGENDARY AND TRADITIONAL. By the Author of "Household Stories."

Swift and Sure, or THE CAREER OF TWO BROTHERS. By A. ELWES.

Tales of the Saracens. By BARBARA HUTTON.

Tales of the White Cockade. By BARBARA HUTTON.

Wilton of Cuthbert's: A TALE OF UNDERGRADUATE LIFE THIRTY YEARS AGO. By the Rev. H. C. ADAMS.

Workman and Soldier. A TALE OF PARIS LIFE DURING THE SIEGE AND THE RULE OF THE COMMUNE. By JAMES F. COBB, (*or bevelled boards, gilt edges, 6s.*)

Young Franc Tireurs (The), AND THEIR ADVENTURES DURING THE FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR. By G. A. HENTY, Special Correspondent of the *Standard*.

Five Shillings each, cloth, Illustrated, gilt edges.

Elwes' (A.) Luke Ashleigh, or SCHOOL LIFE IN HOLLAND.

„ **Paul Blake, or A BOY'S PERILS IN CORSICA AND MONTE CRISTO.**

Neptune's Heroes, or THE SEA KINGS OF ENGLAND, FROM HAWKINS TO FRANKLIN. By W. H. DAVENPORT ADAMS.

Talks about Plants, or EARLY LESSONS IN BOTANY. By Mrs. LANKESTER. With six Coloured Plates and numerous Wood Engravings.

A NEW UNIFORM SERIES OF FIVE SHILLING VOLS.

Square Crown 8vo., gilt edges.

The Day of Wonders: A MEDLEY OF SENSE AND NONSENSE. By M. SULLIVAN. 30 Illustrations by W. G. BROWNE.

Harty the Wanderer; or, CONDUCT IS FATE. A Tale by FAIRLEIGH OWEN. 28 Illustrations by JOHN PROCTOR.

A Wayside Posy. GATHERED FOR GIRLS. By F. LABLACHE. 15 Illustrations by A. H. COLLINS.

Price Five Shillings each, cloth elegant, Illustrated.

Extraordinary Nursery Rhymes; New, yet Old. Translated from the Original Jingle into Comic Verse by One who was once a Child. 60 Illustrations. Small 4to.

Favourite Picture Book (The) and Nursery Companion. Compiled anew by UNCLE CHARLIE. With 450 Illustrations by ABSOLON, ANELAY, BENNETT, BROWNE (PHIZ), SIR JOHN GILBERT, T. LANDSEER, LEECH, PROUT, HARRISON WEIR, and others. Medium 4to., cloth elegant (or coloured Illustrations, 10s. 6d.)

*. * This may also be had in Four Parts, in fancy wrapper, price 1s. each, or coloured Illustrations, 2s. each.

Little Gipsy (The). By ELIE SAUVAGE. Translated by ANNA BLACKWELL. Profusely illustrated by ERNEST FRÖLICH. Small 4to.; (or, extra cloth, *gilt edges*, 6s.)

Nonstone; or, RIFTS IN THE CLOUDS. By M. E. HATTERSLEY.

Merry Songs for Little Voices. Words by Mrs. BRODERIP. Music by THOMAS MURBY. With 40 Illustrations. Fcap. 4to.

Stories from the Old and New Testaments. By the Rev. B. H. DRAPER. With 48 Engravings.

Trimmer's History of the Robins. Written for the Instruction of Children on their treatment of Animals. With 24 Illustrations by HARRISON WEIR. Small 4to, gilt edges.

Four Shillings and Sixpence each, cloth elegant, with Illustrations; or with gilt edges, 5s.

Alda Graham; and her Brother Philip. By E. MARRYAT NORRIS.

Book of Cats (The): a Chit-chat Chronicle of Feline Facts and Fancies. By CHARLES H. ROSS.

"Buttons." THE TRIALS AND TRAVELS OF A YOUNG GENTLEMAN. By ASCOTT R. HOPE.

Casimir, the Little Exile. By CAROLINE PEACHEY.

Cornertown Chronicles. NEW LEGENDS OF OLD LORE WRITTEN FOR THE YOUNG. By KATHLEEN KNOX.

Favourite Fables in Prose and Verse. With 24 beautiful Illustrations from Drawings by HARRISON WEIR. Small 4to.

Fiery Cross (The), OR THE VOW OF MONTROSE. By BARBARA HUTTON.

Four Shillings and Sixpence each—continued.

Mandarin's Daughter (The): A STORY OF THE GREAT TAIPING REBELLION. By SAMUEL MOSSMAN.

Modern British Plutarch (The), or LIVES OF MEN DISTINGUISHED IN THE RECENT HISTORY OF OUR COUNTRY FOR THEIR TALENTS, VIRTUES, AND ACHIEVEMENTS. By W. C. TAYLOR, LL.D.

Oak Staircase, (The) or THE STORIES OF LORD AND LADY DESMOND a Narrative of the Times of James II. By M. and C. LEE.

Royal Umbrella (The). By MAJOR A. F. P. HARCOURT, Author of "The Shakespeare Argosy," &c., &c. With 4 full page Illustrations by LINLEY SAMBOURNE.

Silver Linings: or, LIGHT AND SHADE. By Mrs. REGINALD M. BRAY.

Tales and Legends of Saxony and Lusatia. By W. WESTALL.

Theodora: a Tale for Girls. By EMILIA MARRYAT NORRIS.

Zipporah, the Jewish Maiden. By M. E. BEWSHER.

Three Shillings and Sixpence plain; or coloured plates and gilt edges, Four Shillings and Sixpence, Super Royal 16mo, cloth elegant, with Illustrations.

Aunt Jenny's American Pets. By CATHERINE C. HOPLY.

Broderip (Mrs.) Crosspatch, the Cricket, and the Counterpane.

„ **My Grandmother's Budget** OF STORIES AND VERSES.

„ **Tales of the Toys.** TOLD BY THEMSELVES.

„ **Tiny Tadpole,** AND OTHER TALES.

Cousin Trix, AND HER WELCOME TALES. By GEORGINA CRAIK.

Cosmorama: THE MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF ALL NATIONS OF THE WORLD DESCRIBED. By J. ASPIN.

Distant Homes, or THE GRAHAM FAMILY IN NEW ZEALAND. By Mrs. I. E. AYLMER.

Early Days of English Princes. By Mrs. RUSSELL GRAY.

Echoes of an Old Bell. By the Hon. AUGUSTA BETHELL.

Facts to Correct Fancies, or SHORT NARRATIVES OF REMARKABLE WOMEN.

Fairy Land, or RECREATION FOR THE RISING GENERATION, in Prose and Verse. By THOMAS and JANE HOOD. Illustrated by T. HOOD, Jun.

Feathers and Fairies, or STORIES FROM THE REALMS OF FANCY. By the Hon. AUGUSTA BETHELL.

Garden (The), or FREDERICK'S MONTHLY INSTRUCTION FOR THE MANAGEMENT AND FORMATION OF A FLOWER GARDEN. With Illustrations by SOWERBY. 6s. coloured.

Three Shillings and Sixpence each—continued.

Hacco the Dwarf, or THE TOWER ON THE MOUNTAIN, and other Tales. By LADY LUSHINGTON.

Happy Home (The), or THE CHILDREN AT THE RED HOUSE. By LADY LUSHINGTON.

Helen in Switzerland. By the Hon. AUGUSTA BETHELL.

Holidays among the Mountains, or SCENES AND STORIES OF WALES. By M. BETHAM EDWARDS.

Lightsome and the Little Golden Lady. Written and Illustrated by C. H. BENNETT. Twenty-four Engravings.

Nursery Times, or STORIES ABOUT THE LITTLE ONES. By an Old Nurse.

Play Room Stories, or HOW TO MAKE PEACE. By GEORGIANA M. CRAIK.

Peep at the Pixies (A), or LEGENDS OF THE WEST. By Mrs. BRAY.

Scenes and Stories of the Rhine. By M. BETHAM EDWARDS.

Seven Birthdays (The), or THE CHILDREN OF FORTUNE. By KATHLEEN KNOX.

Starlight Stories, TOLD TO BRIGHT EYES AND LISTENING EARS. By FANNY LABLACHE.

Stories of Edward, AND HIS LITTLE FRIENDS.

Tales of Magic and Meaning. Written and Illustrated by ALFRED CROWQUILL.

Three Shillings and Sixpence plain, cloth elegant, with Illustrations by eminent Artists, or with gilt edges, price 4s.

Cast Adrift, the Story of a Waif. By Mrs. HERBERT MARTIN.

Castles and their Heroes. By BARBARA HUTTON.

Clement's Trial and Victory, or SOWING AND REAPING. By M. E. B. (Mrs. GELLIE). Third Thousand.

Faggots for the Fireside, or TALES OF FACT AND FANCY. By PETER PARLEY.

Three Shillings and Sixpence each—continued.

Great and Small; SCENES IN THE LIFE OF CHILDREN. Translated, with permission, from the French of Mdle. Laroque, by Miss HARRIET POOLE. With 61 Illustrations by BERTALL.

Grey Towers; or AUNT HETTY'S WILL. By M. M. POLLARD.

Isabel's Difficulties, or LIGHT ON THE DAILY PATH. By M. R. CAREY.

Joachim's Spectacles: A LEGEND OF FLORENTHAL. By M. & C. LEE.

Kingston's (W.H.G.) Fred Markham in Russia, or, THE BOY TRAVELLERS IN THE LAND OF THE OZAR.

„ **Manco the Peruvian Chief.**

„ **Mark Seaworth; a Tale of the Indian Ocean.**

„ **Peter the Whaler; HIS EARLY LIFE AND ADVENTURES IN THE ARCTIC REGIONS.**

„ **Salt Water, or NEIL D'ARCY'S SEA LIFE AND ADVENTURES.**

Lee (Mrs.) Anecdotes of the Habits and Instincts of Animals.

„ **Anecdotes of the Habits and Instincts of Birds, Reptiles, and Fishes.**

„ **Adventures in Australia, or THE WANDERINGS OF CAPTAIN SPENCER IN THE BUSH AND THE WILDS.**

„ **The African Wanderers, or CARLOS AND ANTONIO.**

Little May's Friends, or COUNTRY PETS AND PASTIMES. By ANNIE WHITTEM.

Louisa Broadhurst; or FIRST EXPERIENCES. By A. M.

My School Days in Paris. By MARGARET S. JEUNE.

Meadow Lea, or THE GIPSY CHILDREN.

Millicent and Her Cousins. By the Hon. AUGUSTA BETHELL.

New Girl (The), or THE RIVALS; a Tale of School Life. By M. E. B. (Mrs. GELLIE).

North Pole (The); AND HOW CHARLIE WILSON DISCOVERED IT. By the Author of "Realms of the Ice King," &c.

Our Old Uncle's Home; AND WHAT THE BOYS DID THERE. By Mother CAREY.

Queen Dora: THE LIFE AND LESSONS OF A LITTLE GIRL. By KATHLEEN KNOX.

Rosamond Fane, or THE PRISONERS OF ST. JAMES. By M. and C. LEE.

Talent in Tatters, or SOME VICISSITUDES IN THE LIFE OF AN ENGLISH BOY. By HOPE WRAYTHE.

Three Shillings and Sixpence each—continued.

The Triumphs of Steam, or STORIES FROM THE LIVES OF WATT, ARKWRIGHT, AND STEPHENSON.

The Whispers of a Shell, or STORIES OF THE SEA. By FRANCES FREELING BRODERIP.

Wild Roses, or SIMPLE STORIES OF COUNTRY LIFE. By the same.

Three Shillings and Sixpence each, cloth elegant, Illustrated.

Among the Zulus. By LIEUT.-COL. DRAYSON. Cloth, gilt edges.

Attractive Picture Book (The). A New Gift Book from the Old Corner, containing numerous Illustrations by eminent Artists.

Bound in Elegant Paper Boards, Royal 4to, price 3s. 6d. each plain; 7s. 6d. coloured; 10s. 6d. mounted on cloth and coloured.

Berries and Blossoms: a Verse Book for Young People. By T. WESTWOOD.

Bible Illustrations, or A DESCRIPTION OF MANNERS AND CUSTOMS PECULIAR TO THE EAST. By the Rev. B. H. DRAPER. Revised by Dr. KITTO.

British History Briefly Told (The), AND A DESCRIPTION OF THE ANCIENT CUSTOMS, SPORTS, AND PASTIMES OF THE ENGLISH.

Four Seasons (The); A Short Account of the Structure of Plants being Four Lectures written for the Working Men's Institute, Paris. With Illustrations. Imperial 16mo.

Family Bible Newly Opened (The); WITH UNCLE GOODWIN'S ACCOUNT OF IT. By JEFFREYS TAYLOR. Fcap. 8vo.

Glimpses of Nature, AND OBJECTS OF INTEREST DESCRIBED DURING A VISIT TO THE ISLE OF WIGHT. By Mrs. LOUDON. Forty-one Illustrations.

History of the Robins (The). By Mrs. TRIMMER. In Words of One Syllable. Edited by the Rev. CHARLES SWETE, M.A.

Historical Acting Charades, or AMUSEMENTS FOR WINTER EVENINGS. By the Author of "Cat and Dog," etc. Fcap. 8vo.

Infant Amusements, or HOW TO MAKE A NURSERY HAPPY. With Practical Hints on the Moral and Physical Training of Children. By W. H. G. KINGSTON.

Little Margaret's Ride to the Isle of Wight; or, THE WONDERFUL ROCKING HORSE. By Mrs. FREDERICK BROWN. With Eight Illustrations in chromo-lithography, by HELEN S. TATEHAM. Crown 4to.

Three Shillings and Sixpence each—continued.

Man's Boot (The), AND OTHER STORIES IN WORDS OF ONE SYLLABLE. Illustrations by HARRISON WEIR. 4to., gilt edges.

The Mine, or SUBTERRANEAN WONDERS. An Account of the Operations of the Miner and the Products of his Labours.

Modern Sphinx (The). A Collection of ENIGMAS, CHARADES, REBUSES, DOUBLE AND TRIPLE ACROSTICS, ANAGRAMS, LOGOGRIPHS, METAGRAMS, VERBAL PUZZLES, CONUNDRUMS, etc. Fcap. 8vo, price 3s. 6d.; gilt edges, 4s.

Root and Flower. By JOHN PALMER.

Sunbeam: a Fairy Tale. By Mrs. PIETZKER.

Sylvia's New Home, a Story for the Young. By Mrs. J. F. B. FIRTH.

Taking Tales for Cottage Homes. In Plain Language and Large Type. Two vols.

May also be had in 4 vols, 1s. 6d. each; and 12 parts, 4d. each.

Three Shillings and Sixpence plain; Five Shillings coloured.

Bear King (The): a Narrative confided to the Marines by JAMES GREENWOOD. With Illustrations by ERNEST GRISSET. Small 4to.

Familiar Natural History. By Mrs. R. LEE. With 42 Illustrations by HARRISON WEIR.

* * * Also, in Two Vols., entitled "British Animals and Birds," "Foreign Animals and Birds." 2s. each, plain; 2s. 6d. coloured.

Old Nurse's Book of Rhymes, Jingles, and Ditties. Illustrated by C. H. BENNETT. Ninety Engravings.

Three Shillings, or gilt edges, Three and Sixpence.

Our Soldiers, or ANECDOTES OF THE CAMPAIGNS AND GALLANT DEEDS OF THE BRITISH ARMY DURING THE REIGN OF HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA. By W. H. G. KINGSTON. With Frontispiece. New and Revised Edition. Eighth Thousand.

Our Sailors, or ANECDOTES OF THE ENGAGEMENTS AND GALLANT DEEDS OF THE BRITISH NAVY. With Frontispiece. New and Revised Edition. Eighth Thousand.

Lucy's Campaign: a Story of Adventure. By M. and C. LEE. Gilt edges.

Fruits of Enterprise, EXHIBITED IN THE TRAVELS OF BELZONI IN EGYPT AND NUBIA. With Six Engravings by BIRKET FOSTER.

*Two Shillings and Sixpence plain, Super Royal 16mo,
cloth elegant, with Illustrations by Harrison Weir
and others.*

**Adventures and Experiences of Biddy Dorking and of the Fat
Frog.** Edited by Mrs. S. C. HALL.

Alice and Beatrice. By GRANDMANNA.

Amy's Wish, and What Came of It. By Mrs. TYLEE.

Animals and their Social Powers. By MARY TURNER-ANDREWES.

Cat and Dog, or MEMOIRS OF PUSS AND THE CAPTAIN.

Orib and Fly: a Tale of Two Terriers.

Discontented Children (The), AND HOW THEY WERE CURED. By M.
and E. KIRBY.

Doll and Her Friends (The), or MEMOIRS OF THE LADY SERAPHINA.
By the Author of "Cat and Dog."

Early Dawn (The), or STORIES TO THINK ABOUT.

Every Inch a King, or THE STORY OF REX AND HIS FRIENDS. By
Mrs. J. WORTHINGTON BLISS.

Fairy Gifts, or A WALLET OF WONDERS. By KATHLEEN KNOX.

Funny Fables for Little Folks.

Fun and Earnest, or RHYMES WITH REASON. - By D'ARCY W.
THOMPSON. Illustrated by C. H. BENNETT. Imperial 16mo.

Gerty and May. Eighth Thousand.

By the same Author.

Granny's Story Box. New Edition. With 20 Engravings.

Children of the Parsonage.
Our White Violet.

**Sunny Days, OR A MONTH AT
THE GREAT STOWE.**

The New Baby.

**Jack Frost and Betty Snow; with other Tales for Wintry Nights
and Rainy Days.**

Julia Maitland, or, PRIDE GOES BEFORE A FALL. By M. & E. KIRBY.

Lost in the Jungle; A TALE OF THE INDIAN MUTINY. By
AUGUSTA MARRYAT.

Madelon. By ESTHER CARR.

Neptune: OF THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A NEWFOUNDLAND DOG.

Two Shillings and Sixpence each—continued.

Norris (Emilia Marryat.) A Week by Themselves.

By the same Author.

Adrift on the Sea.
Children's Pic-Nic (The).
Geoffry's Great Fault.
Harry at School.
Paul Howard's Captivity.

Seaside Home.
Snowed Up.
Stolen Cherries.
What became of Tommy.

Odd Stories about Animals: told in Short and Easy Words.
Our Home in the Marsh Land, or DAYS OF AULD LANG SYNE.
By E. L. F.

Scripture Histories for Little Children. With Sixteen Illustrations
by JOHN GILBERT.

CONTENTS:—The History of Joseph—History of Moses—History
of our Saviour—The Miracles of Christ.

Sold separately 6d. each, plain; 1s. coloured.

Secret of Wrexford (The), or STELLA DESMOND'S SECRET. By
ESTHER CARR.

Stories of Julian and His Playfellows. Written by his MAMMA.

Tales from Catland. Dedicated to the Young Kittens of England.
By an OLD TABBY. Seventh Thousand.

**Talking Bird (The), or THE LITTLE GIRL WHO KNEW WHAT WAS
GOING TO HAPPEN.** By M. and E. KIRBY.

Ten of Them, or THE CHILDREN OF DANEHURST. By Mrs. R. M.
BRAY.

"Those Unlucky Twins!" By A. LYSTER.

Tiny Stories for Tiny Readers in Tiny Words.

Titlle Tattle; and other Stories for Children. By the Author of
"Little Tales for Tiny Tots," etc.

Trottie's Story Book: True Tales in Short Words and Large
Type.

Tuppy, or THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A DONKEY.

Wandering Blindfold, or A BOY'S TROUBLES. By MARY ALBERT.

*Two Shillings and Sixpence, with Illustrations, cloth
elegant, or with gilt edges, Three Shillings.*

A Child's Influence, or KATHLEEN AND HER GREAT UNCLE. By
LISA LOCKYER.

Adventures of Kwei, the Chinese Girl. By M.E.B. (Mrs. GELLIE).

Two Shillings and Sixpence each—continued.

- Bertrand Du Guesclin, the Hero of Brittany. By EMILE DE BOWNECHON. Translated by MARGARET S. JEUNE.
- Corner Cottage, and Its Inmates, or TRUST IN GOD. By FRANCES OSBORNE.
- Davenport's (Mrs.) Constance and Nellie, or THE LOST WILL.
- .. Our Birthdays, AND HOW TO IMPROVE THEM.
- .. The Holidays Abroad, or RIGHT AT LAST.
- Father Time's Story Book for the Little Ones. By KATHLEEN KNOX.
- From Peasant to Prince, or THE LIFE OF ALEXANDER PRINCE MENSCHIKOFF. From the Russian by Madame PIETEKER.
- William Allair, or RUNNING AWAY TO SEA. By Mrs. H. WOOD.

Two Shillings and Sixpence each, Illustrated.

- Among the Zulus: the Adventures of Hans Sterk, South African Hunter and Pioneer. By LIEUT.-COLONEL A. W. DRAYSON, R.A.
- Boy's Own Toy Maker (The): a Practical Illustrated Guide to the useful employment of Leisure Hours. By E. LANDELLS. 200 Illustrations.
- Fairy Tales. Published by command of her Bright Dazzlingness Gloriana, Queen of Fairyland. By a Soldier of the Queen.
- Girl's Own Toy Maker (The), AND BOOK OF RECREATION. By E. and A. LANDELLS. With 200 Illustrations.
- Little Child's Fable Book. Arranged Progressively in One, Two and Three Syllables. 16 Page Illus. (4s. 6d. coloured, gilt edges.)
- Little Pilgrim (The). Revised and Illustrated by HELEN PETRIE.
- Model Yachts, and Model Yacht Sailing: HOW TO BUILD, RIG, AND SAIL A SELF-ACTING MODEL YACHT. By JAS. E. WALTON, V.M.Y.C. Fcap. 4to., with 58 Woodcuts.
- Silly Peter: A QUEER STORY OF A DAFT BOY, A PRINCE, AND A MILLER'S DAUGHTER. By W. NORRIS.
- Spring Time; or, Words in Season. A Book for Girls. By SIDNEY COX. Third Edition.

A NEW UNIFORM SERIES OF HALF-CROWN BOOKS.

Cloth elegant, fully Illustrated.

- African Pets: or, CHATS ABOUT OUR ANIMAL FRIENDS IN NATAL, WITH A SKETCH OF KAFFIR LIFE. By F. CLINTON PARRY.
- Bunchy: or, THE CHILDREN OF SCARBROOK FARM. By Miss E. C. PHILLIPS, Author of "The Orphans," &c.
- Ways and Tricks of Animals, WITH STORIES ABOUT AUNT MARY'S PETS. By MARY HOOVER.
- Kitty and Bo: or, THE STORY OF A VERY LITTLE GIRL AND BOY. By A. T. With Frontispiece.
- On the Leads: or, WHAT THE PLANETS SAW. By Mrs. A. A. STRANGE BUTSON.

COMICAL PICTURE BOOKS.

*Two Shillings and Sixpence each, Coloured Plates,
fancy boards.*

English Struwwelpeter (The): or PRETTY STORIES AND FUNNY PICTURES FOR LITTLE CHILDREN. After the celebrated German Work, Dr. HEINRICH HOFFMANN, Twenty-sixth Edition. Twenty-four pages of Illustrations (or mounted on linen, 5s.).

Loves of Tom Tucker and Little Bo-Peep. Written and Illustrated by THOMAS HOOD.

Spectropla, or SURPRISING SPECTRAL ILLUSIONS, showing Ghosts everywhere, and of any Colour. By J. H. BROWN.

Upside Down: a Series of Amusing Pictures from Sketches by the late W. McCONNELL, with Verses by THOMAS HOOD.

*Two Shillings, cloth elegant, with Illustrations, or with
coloured plates, gilt edges, Three Shillings.*

Fanny and Her Mamma, or EASY LESSONS FOR CHILDREN.

Good in Everything, or THE EARLY HISTORY OF GILBERT HARLAND. By Mrs. BARWELL.

Infantine Knowledge: a Spelling and Reading Book on a Popular Plan.

Little Lessons for Little Learners, in Words of One Syllable. By Mrs. BARWELL.

Mamma's Bible Stories, FOR HER LITTLE BOYS AND GIRLS.

Mamma's Bible Stories (A Sequel to).

Mamma's Lessons, FOR HER LITTLE BOYS AND GIRLS.

Silver Swan (The): a Fairy Tale. By MADAME DE CHATELAIN.

Tales of School Life. By AGNES LOUDON.

Wonders of Home, in Eleven Stories (The). By GRANDFATHER GREY.

Two Shillings each.

Confessions of a Lost Dog (The). Reported by her Mistress, FRANCES POWER COBBE. With a Photograph of the Dog from Life, by FRANK HARRIS.

Home Amusements: a Choice Collection of Riddles, Charades, Conundrums, Parlour Games, and Forfeits.

How to Make Dolls' Furniture AND TO FURNISH A DOLL'S HOUSE. With 70 Illustrations. Small 4to.

Two Shillings each—continued.

Illustrated Paper Model Maker. By E. LANDELLS.

Rhymes and Pictures ABOUT BREAD, TEA, SUGAR, COTTON, COALS, AND GOLD. By WILLIAM NEWMAN. Seventy-two Illustrations. Price 2s. plain; 3s. 6d. coloured.

* * Each Subject may be had separately. 6d. plain; 1s. coloured.

Scenes of Animal Life and Character, FROM NATURE AND RECOLLECTION. In Twenty Plates. By J. B. 4to, fancy boards.

Surprising Adventures of the Olumsy Boy Crusoe (The). By CHARLES H. ROSS. With Twenty-three Coloured Illustrations.

A NEW UNIFORM SERIES.

Price One Shilling and Sixpence each, cloth elegant, fully Illustrated.

Angelo; or, THE PINE FOREST IN THE ALPS. By GERALDINE E. JEWELRY. 5th Thousand.

Aunt Annette's Stories to Ada. By ANNETTE A. SALAMAN.

Brave Nelly; or, WEAK HANDS AND A WILLING HEART. By M.E.B. (Mrs. GELLIE). Fifth Thousand.

Featherland; or, HOW THE BIRDS LIVED AT GREENLAWN. By G. M. FENN. 4th Thousand.

Humble Life: a Tale of HUMBLE HOMES. By the Author of "Gerty and May," &c.

Kingston's (W. H. G.) Child of the Wreck: or, THE LOSS OF THE ROYAL GEORGE.

Lee's (Mrs. R.) Playing at Settlers; or, THE FAGGOT HOUSE.
Twelve Stories of the Sayings and Doings of Animals.

Little Lisette, THE ORPHAN OF ALSACE. By M.E.B. (Mrs. GELLIE).

Live Toys; or, ANECDOTES OF OUR FOUR-LEGGED AND OTHER PETS. By EMMA DAVENPORT.

Long Evenings; or, STORIES FOR MY LITTLE FRIENDS. By EMILIA MARRYATT.

Three Wishes (The). By M.E.B. (Mrs. GELLIE).

Price One Shilling and Sixpence each, cloth elegant, Illustrated.

- Always Happy**, or, ANECDOTES OF FELIX AND HIS SISTER SERENA. By a Mother. Twentieth Thousand.
- Every-Day Things**, or USEFUL KNOWLEDGE RESPECTING THE PRINCIPAL ANIMAL, VEGETABLE, AND MINERAL SUBSTANCES IN COMMON USE.
- Grandmamma's Relics**, AND HER STORIES ABOUT THEM. By E. E. BOWEN.
- Happy Holidays**: or, BROTHERS AND SISTERS AT HOME. By EMMA DAVENPORT. New and cheaper Edition.
- Holiday Tales**. By FLORENCE WILFORD. Author of "Nigel Bartram's Ideal," etc.
- Kingston (W. H. G.) The Heroic Wife**; or, THE ADVENTURES OF A FAMILY ON THE BANKS OF THE AMAZON.
- Little Boesbuck (The)**, from the German. Illustrated by LOSSON. Fancy boards (*2s. coloured*).
- Taking Tales for Cottage Homes**. In Plain Language and Large Type. Four vols.
- May also be had in Two vols., *3s. 6d.* each; or in the following 12 parts, paper covers, price 4d. each; or cloth limp, 6d. each.

N.B.—Each Tale is Illustrated and complete in itself.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. The Miller of Hillbrook : A RURAL TALE. | 7. Life on the Coast ; OR THE LITTLE FISHER GIRL. |
| 2. Tom Trueman , A SAILOR IN A MERCHANTMAN. | 8. Adventures of Two Orphans in London. |
| 3. Michael Hale and his Family in Canada. | 9. Early Days on Board a Man-of-War . |
| 4. John Armstrong , THE SOLDIER. | 10. Walter , the Foundling: A TALE OF OLDEN TIMES. |
| 5. Joseph Rudge , THE AUSTRALIAN SHEPHERD. | 11. The Tenants of Sunnyside Farm . |
| 6. Life Underground ; OR DICK, THE COLLIERY BOY. | 12. Helmwood : OR, THE NEW ZEALAND SETTLER. |

Trimmer's (Mrs.) New Testament Lessons. With 40 Engravings.

A NEW UNIFORM SERIES OF SHILLING VOLUMES.

Cloth elegant, Illustrated.

- Among the Brigands**, and other Tales of Adventure. New and cheaper Edition. Fourth Thousand.
- Christian Elliott**: or, MRS. DANVER'S PRIZE. By L. N. COMYN. New and cheaper Edition. Fourth Thousand.
- Wrecked, Not Lost**; or THE PILOT AND HIS COMPANION. By the Hon. Mrs. DUNDAS. New and cheaper Edition. Fifth Thousand.

THE FAVOURITE LIBRARY.

New Editions of the Volumes in this Series are being issued, and other Volumes by Popular Authors will be added.

*Cloth elegant, with coloured frontispiece and title-page,
One Shilling each.*

1. **The Eakdale Herd Boy.** BY LADY STODDART.
2. **Mrs. Leicester's School.** BY CHARLES and MARY LAMB.
3. **The History of The Robins.** BY MRS. TRIMMER.
4. **Memoir of Bob, The Spotted Terrier.**
5. **Keeper's Travels in Search of His Master.**
6. **The Scottish Orphans.** BY LADY STODDART.
7. **Never Wrong; or, the Young Disputant; & It was only in Fun.**
8. **The Life and Perambulations of a Mouse.**
9. **The Son of a Genius.** BY MRS. HOFLAND.
10. **The Daughter of a Genius.** BY MRS. HOFLAND.
11. **Ellen, the Teacher.** BY MRS. HOFLAND.
12. **Theodore; or, The Crusaders.** BY MRS. HOFLAND.
13. **Right and Wrong.** BY the Author of "ALWAYS HAPPY."
14. **Harry's Holiday.** BY JEFFREYS TAYLOR.
15. **Short Poems and Hymns for Children.**

Price One Shilling each, in various styles of binding.

The Picturesque Primer.

Fragments of Knowledge for Little Folk.

Easy Reading for Little Readers.

The Nursery Companion.

These Four Volumes contain about 450 pictures. Each one being complete in itself, and bound in an attractive paper cover (also with coloured Illustrations, 2s.)

The Four Volumes bound together form the "Favourite Picture Book," bound in cloth, price 5s., or coloured Illustrations, gilt edges, 10s. 6d.

Australian Babes in the Wood (The): a True Story told in Rhyme for the Young. Price 1s. boards, 1s. 6d. cloth, gilt edges.

Cowalip (The). Fully Illustrated cloth, 1s. plain; 1s. 6d. coloured.

Daisy (The). Fully Illustrated cloth, 1s. plain; 1s. 6d. coloured.

Dame Partlett's Farm. AN ACCOUNT OF THE RICHES SHE OBTAINED BY INDUSTRY, &c. Coloured Illustrations, sewed.

Female Christian Names, AND THEIR TEACHINGS. A Gift Book for Girls. By MARY E. BROMFIELD. Cloth, gilt edges.

One Shilling each—continued.

Golden Words for Children, FROM THE BOOK OF LIFE. In English, French, and German. A set of Illuminated Cards in Packet. Or bound in cloth interleaved, price 2s. 6d. gilt edges.

Goody Two Shoes: or THE HISTORY OF LITTLE MARGERY MEANWELL IN RHYME. Fully Illustrated, cloth.

Hand Shadows, to be thrown upon the Wall. Novel and amusing figures formed by the hand. By HENRY BURSILL. New and cheaper Edition. Twelfth Thousand. Two Series in one. (Or coloured Illustrations, 1s. 6d.)

Headlong Career (The) and Woeful Ending of Precocious Piggy. By THOMAS HOOD. Illustrated by his Son. Printed in colours. Fancy wrapper, 4to. (Or mounted on cloth, untearable, 2s.)

Johnny Miller; or TRUTH AND PERSEVERANCE. By FELIX WEISS.

Nine Lives of a Cat (The): a Tale of Wonder. Written and Illustrated by C. H. BENNETT. 24 Coloured Engravings, sewed.

Peter Piper. PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES OF PLAIN AND PERFECT PRONUNCIATION. Coloured Illustrations, sewed.

Plaiting Pictures. A NOVEL PASTIME BY WHICH CHILDREN CAN CONSTRUCT AND RECONSTRUCT PICTURES FOR THEMSELVES. Four Series in Fancy Coloured Wrappers. Oblong 4to.

First Series.—Juvenile Party—Zoological Gardens—The Gleaner.

Second Series.—Birds' Pic-nic—Cats' Concert—Three Bears.

Third Series.—Blind Man's Buff—Children in the Wood—Snow Man.

Fourth Series.—Grandfather's Birthday—Gymnasium—Playroom.

Primrose Pilgrimage (The): a Woodland Story. By M. BETHAM EDWARDS. Illustrated by MACQUOID. Sewed.

Short and Simple Prayers, with Hymns for the Use of Children. By the Author of "Mamma's Bible Stories." Sixteenth Thousand. Cloth.

Whittington and his Cat. Coloured Illustrations, sewed.

Young Vocalist (The). A Collection of Twelve Songs, each with an Accompaniment for the Pianoforte. By Mrs. MOUNSEY BARTHOLOMEW. New and Cheaper Edition. (Or bound in cloth, price 2s.)

DURABLE NURSERY BOOKS.

Mounted on cloth with coloured plates, One Shilling each.

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|--|---------------------------|
| 1. COCK ROBIN. | | 3. DAME TROT AND HER CAT. |
| 2. COURTSHIP OF JENNY WREN. | | 4. HOUSE THAT JACK BUILT |
| | | 5. PUSS IN BOOTS. |

Price Sixpence each, Plain; One Shilling, coloured.

- | | | |
|---|---|----------------------------------|
| 1. British Animals. 1st Series. | } | Illustrated by HARRISON
WEIR. |
| 2. British Animals. 2nd Series. | | |
| 3. British Birds. | | |
| 4. Foreign Animals. 1st Series. | | |
| 5. Foreign Animals. 2nd Series. | | |
| 6. Foreign Birds. | | |
| 7. The Farm and its Scenes. | } | Illustrated by JOHN
GILBERT. |
| 8. The diverting history of John Gilpin. | | |
| 9. The Peacock at home, and Butterfly's Ball. | | |
| 10. History of Joseph. | | |
| 11. History of Moses. | | |
| 12. Life of our Saviour. | | |
| 13. Miracles of Christ. | | |

His name was Hero. Price 1s. sewed.

By the Same Author.

How I became a Governess. 3rd Edit. 2s. cloth; 2s. 6d., gilt edges.

My Pretty Puss. With Frontispiece. Price 6d.

The Grateful Sparrow: a True Story. Fifth Edition, price 6d.

The Adventures of a Butterfly. Price 8d.

The Hare that Found his Way Home. Price 6d.

WORKS FOR DISTRIBUTION.

A Woman's Secret; or, How to MAKE HOME HAPPY. Thirty-third Thousand. 18mo, price 6d.

By the same Author, uniform in size and price.

Woman's Work; or, How SHE CAN HELP THE SICK. 19th Thousand.

A Chapter of Accidents; or, THE MOTHER'S ASSISTANT IN CASES OF BURNS, SCALDS, CUTS, &c. Ninth Thousand.

Pay to-day, Trust to-morrow; illustrating the Evils of the Tally System. Seventh Thousand.

Nursery Work; or, HANNAH BAKER'S FIRST PLACE. Fifth Thousand.

The Cook and the Doctor; or, CHEAP RECIPES AND USEFUL REMEDIES. Selected from the three first books. Price 2d.

Home Difficulties. A Few Words on the Servant Question. 4d.

Family Prayers for Cottage Homes. Price 2d.

Educational Works.

HISTORY.

- Britannia:** a Collection of the Principal Passages in Latin Authors that refer to this Island, with Vocabulary and Notes. By T. S. CAYZER. Illustrated with a Map and 29 Woodcuts. Crown 8vo. Price 3s. 6d.
- True Stories from Ancient History,** chronologically arranged from the Creation of the World to the Death of Charlemagne. 12mo. 5s. cloth.
- Mrs. Trimmer's Concise History of England,** revised and brought down to the present Time. By Mrs. MILNER. With Portraits of the Sovereigns. 5s. cloth.
- Rhymes of Royalty:** the History of England in Verse, from the Norman Conquest to the reign of VICTORIA; with a summary of the leading events in each reign. Fcap. 8vo. 2s. cloth.

GEOGRAPHY.

Re-issue of

- Pictorial Geography,** for the Instruction of Young Children. Price 1s. 6d.; mounted on rollers 3s. 6d.
- Gaultier's Familiar Geography.** With a concise Treatise on the Artificial Sphere, and two coloured Maps, illustrative of the principal Geographical Terms. 16mo, 3s. cloth.
- Butler's Outline Maps, and Key,** or GEOGRAPHICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL EXERCISES; with a Set of Coloured Outline Maps, designed for the use of Young Persons. By the late WILLIAM BUTLER. Enlarged by the Author's Son, J. O. BUTLER. Thirty-sixth Edition. Revised 4s.

GRAMMAR, &c.

- A Compendious Grammar, AND PHILOLOGICAL HAND-BOOK OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE,** for the use of Schools and Candidates for the Army and Civil Service Examinations. By J. G. COLQUHOUN, Esq., Barrister-at-Law. Fcap. 8vo. Cloth 2s. 6d.
- Darnell, G. Grammar made Intelligible to Children.** Being a Series of short and simple Rules, with ample Explanations of Every Difficulty, and copious Exercises for Parsing; in Language adapted to the comprehension of very Young Students. New and Revised Edition. Cloth, 1s.
- Darnell, G. Introduction to English Grammar.** Price 3d.
Being the first 32 pages of "Grammar made Intelligible."
- Darnell, T. Parsing Simplified:** an Introduction and Companion to all Grammars; consisting of Short and Easy Rules, with Parsing Lessons to each. Price 1s. cloth.
- Lovechilds, Mrs. The Child's Grammar.** 50th Edition. 9d. cloth.
- A Word to the Wise, or HINTS ON THE CURRENT IMPROPRIETIES OF EXPRESSION IN WRITING AND SPEAKING.** By PARRY GWYNNE. Sixteenth Thousand. 18mo, price 6d. sewed; or 1s. cloth, gilt edges.

GRAMMAR—*continued.*

Harry Hawkins's H-Book; showing how he learned to aspirate his *h*'s. Eighth Thousand. Sewed, price 6*d.*

Prince of Wales's Primer (The). With 340 Illustrations by J. GILBERT. Price 6*d.*

Darnell, G. **Short and Certain Road to Reading**. Being a Series EASY LESSONS in which the Alphabet is so divided as to enable the Child to read many pages of Familiar Phrases before he has learned half the letters. Cloth, 6*d.*; or in Four parts, paper covers, 1½*d.* each.

Sheet Lessons. Being Extracts from the above, printed in very large, bold type. Price, for the Set of Six Sheets, 6*d.*; or, neatly mounted on boards, 3*s.*

ARITHMETIC AND ALGEBRA.

Darnell, G. **Arithmetic made Intelligible to Children**. Being a Series of GRADUALLY ADVANCING EXERCISES, intended to employ the Reason rather than the Memory of the Pupil; with ample Explanations of Every Difficulty, in Language adapted to the comprehension of very young Students. Cloth, 1*s.* 6*d.*

* * This work may be had in Three parts—Part I, price 6*d.* Part II, price 9*d.* Part III, price 6*d.* A KEY to Parts II and III., price 1*s.* (Part I. does not require a Key.)

Cayzer, T. S. **One Thousand Arithmetical Tests, or THE EXAMINER'S ASSISTANT**. Specially adapted, by a novel arrangement of the subject, for Examination Purposes, but also suited for general use in Schools. With a complete set of Examples and Models of Work. Price 1*s.* 6*d.*

Key with Solutions of all the Examples in the One Thousand Arithmetical Tests. Price 4*s.* 6*d.* cloth. The Answers only, price 1*s.* 6*d.* cloth.

One Thousand Algebraical Tests; on the same plan. 8vo, price 2*s.* 6*d.* cloth.

ANSWERS to the Algebraical Tests, price 2*s.* 6*d.* cloth
Theory and Practice of the Metric System of Weights and Measures. By Prof. LEONE LEVI, F.S.A., F.S.S. Sewed 1*s.*

Essentials of Geometry, Plane and Solid (The), as taught in Germany and France. By J. R. MORRILL. Numerous Diagrams. 2*s.*, cloth.

Artizan Cookery and How to Teach it. By a Pupil of the National Training School for Cookery, South Kensington. Sewed, price 6*d.*

ELEMENTARY FRENCH AND GERMAN WORKS.

- L'Abécédaire of French Pronunciation:** A Manual for Teachers and Students. By G. LEPRÉVOST, of Paris, Professor of Languages. Crown 8vo., cloth, 2s.
- Le Babillard:** an Amusing Introduction to the French Language. By a FRENCH LADY Ninth Edition. 16 Plates. 2s. cloth.
- Les Jeunes Narrateurs, ou PETITS CONTES MORAUX.** With a Key to the difficult Words and Phrases. 3rd Edition. 2s. cloth.
- Pictorial French Grammar (The).** For the use of Children. By MARIN DE LA VOYE. With 80 Illus. Royal 16mo, 1s. 6d. cloth.
- Rowbotham's New and Easy Method of Learning the French Genders.** New Edition. 6d.
- Bellenger's French Word and Phrase Book;** containing a select Vocabulary and Dialogues. New Edition. Price 1s.
- Der Schwätzer, or THE PRATTLER.** An Amusing Introduction to the German Language. Sixteen Illustrations. Price 2s. cloth.

NEEDLEWORK.

By the Examiner of Needlework to the School Board for London.

NEEDLEWORK DEMONSTRATION SHEETS

Exhibit, by Diagrams and Descriptions, the formation of Stitches in Elementary Needlework. The size of the Sheets is 30 × 22 inches. Price, 9d. each; or, mounted on rollers and varnished, 2s. 6d.

Whip Stitch for Frills, and Fern or Coral Stitch ... 1 Sheet	Grafting Stocking Material... 1 Sheet
Hemming, Seaming, and Stitching 1 "	Stocking Web Stitch 1 "
Button Hole 1 "	True Marking Stitch 1 "
Fisherman's Stitch for Braiding Nets 1 "	Alphabets for Marking 6 "
Herring Bone 1 "	Setting in Gathers or "Stocking" Knotting or Seeding (English Method) 1 "

The Demonstration Frame for Class Teaching, with Special Needle and Cord. Price complete, 7s. 6d.

Plain Needlework arranged in Six Standards, with Hints for the Management of Classes, and Appendix on Simultaneous Teaching. Eighteenth Thousand. Price 6d.

Plain Knitting and Mending arranged in Six Standards, with 20 Diagrams. Twelfth Thousand. Price 6d.

Plain Cutting Out for Standards IV., V., and VI., as now required by the Government Educational Department. Adapted to the principles of Elementary Geometry. Sixth Thousand. Price 1s.

A set of the Diagrams referred to in the book may be had separately, printed on stout paper and enclosed in an envelope. Price 1s.

* * *These works are recommended in the published Code of the Educational Department.*

Needlework, Schedule III. Exemplified and Illustrated. Intended for the use of Young Teachers and of the Upper Standards in Elementary Schools. By Mrs. E. A. CURTIS. Cloth limp, with 80 Illustrations, 5th Thousand, price 1s.

DARNELL'S COPY-BOOKS

FOR BOARD, PRIVATE, & PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

Adapted to the Grades of the New Educational Code.

DARNELL'S LARGE POST COPY-BOOKS,

16 Nos., 6d. each.

The first ten of which have, on every alternate line, appropriate and carefully-written copies in Pencil-coloured Ink, to be first written over and then imitated, the remaining numbers having Black Head-lines for imitation only, THE WHOLE GRADUALLY ADVANCING FROM A SIMPLE STROKE TO A SUPERIOR SMALL HAND.

DARNELL'S FOOLSCAP COPY-BOOKS,

**24 Nos., oblong, 3d. each, on the same plan;
or, Superior Paper, Marble Covers, 4d. each.**

DARNELL'S UNIVERSAL COPY-BOOKS,

16 Nos., 2d. each, on the same plan.

DARNELL'S COPY-BOOKS are the oldest and best.

DARNELL'S COPY-BOOKS are a sure guide to a good handwriting.

DARNELL'S COPY-BOOKS have enjoyed over a quarter of a century of public favour.

DARNELL'S COPY-BOOKS are used in nearly all the best Schools in Great Britain and the Colonies.

DARNELL'S COPY-BOOKS are the production of an experienced schoolmaster.

DARNELL'S COPY-BOOKS gradually advance from the simple stroke to a superior small hand.

DARNELL'S COPY-BOOKS.—The assistance given in the primal lessons is reduced as the learner progresses, until all guidance is safely withdrawn.

DARNELL'S COPY-BOOKS.—The number and variety of the copies secure attention, and prevent the pupils copying their own writing, as in books with single head-lines.

DARNELL'S COPY-BOOKS ensure the progress of the learner, and greatly lighten the labours of the teacher.

DARNELL'S COPY-BOOKS.—Important Testimony:—"For teaching writing, I would recommend the use of Darnell's Copy-Books. I have noticed a marked improvement wherever they have been used."—Report of Mr. MAYE (National Society's Organiser of Schools) to the Worcester Diocesan Board of Education.

SPECIMEN COPIES of any of the above will be sent post free on receipt of stamps or Post-office order.

EDUCATIONAL AND OTHER CATALOGUES sent post free on application,

GRIFFITH & FARRAN,

WEST CORNER OF St. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD, LONDON.







